



talis[®]aspire[™]

Case study: Talis Aspire improves the student experience
The University of Manchester and Nottingham Trent University choose Talis Aspire to manage their resource lists

What they wanted:

- Improved student experiences with resource lists, to drive up student satisfaction levels across their institution
- Maximum value from the university's investments in learning resources
- Redeployment of library staff time from administration to student support in partnership with faculties

What Talis Aspire delivers:

- A clean attractive interface giving students a personalised view of resources relevant to their own studies
- Ease of access to electronic journals and books from resource lists, driving uptake of existing investments
- A more intuitive system encouraging academics to create and maintain their own resource lists

Students at the University of Manchester and Nottingham Trent University can now look forward to improved experiences with their course resource lists, as both universities adopt Talis Aspire.

Talis Aspire

Talis Aspire is a next generation resource list management system viewed by both institutions as an important instrument for driving up levels of student satisfaction. Against a background of high overall student ratings at Nottingham Trent University, access to books and other learning materials on resource lists attracted the highest number of student complaints. The University of Manchester library was similarly determined to meet the standards of service in place across the institution.

Shortcomings interim solutions

At Nottingham Trent University, a number of interim measures had failed to improve access, including the development of a widget that enabled teaching staff to provide links to some types of resources at module level within the university's Virtual Learning Environment (Desire2Learn). However, although an improvement on before, it was restricted to printed books and generally fell a long way short of realising the benefits that a fully developed solution would provide.

Towards an integrated and personalised approach

For the University of Manchester, a key priority was to move away from a disjointed experience to an integrated approach, with resource lists connected into the wider

learning environment of the university. A joined-up approach, with single sign-on and other institutional systems, would deliver a seamless and personalised experience in which students see lists relevant to their own studies in familiar environments, including social networking tools.

Talis Aspire and a three-way partnership

With the adoption of Talis Aspire, Rob May, Academic Liaison Team Manager at Nottingham Trent University, is satisfied that “an effective and efficient system is now in place to support a three-way partnership of the library, the academic and the student in the production and management of learning resource lists.”

Lorraine Beard, Head of Information Systems at the John Rylands University Library of the University of Manchester affirmed that “The library at the University of Manchester is keen to work in partnership with faculties to ensure that the resources purchased are those needed to support teaching and learning in the university.”

Releasing library efficiencies

In a context of uncertainty and shrinking budgets that will be familiar to all universities, the library at Nottingham Trent University must derive maximum value for money from its investment in resources, both printed and electronic, and efficient processes are an important part of that. As the library comes under sustained pressure to extend its student services and increase its strategically important academic liaison activities, it is vital to redeploy valuable staff time from administrative tasks. And by integrating Talis Aspire with the library management system, more efficient acquisition workflows can be introduced.

Empowering the lecturer

Lecturers have their own time pressures, and Nottingham Trent University library wants to provide them with a much easier system to use. Talis Aspire’s intuitive “drag and drop” interface will encourage academics to create and manage their own lists. An intelligent bookmarklet system automatically recognises both printed and electronic resources from library catalogues and leading content providers. This enables lecturers to construct their own lists and frees up the library to focus on its core strengths - a big part of the efficiencies that both universities are seeking.

An improved student experience

Academics are aware that they need to pay more attention to students in today’s market-driven climate. The University of Manchester is particularly interested in exploiting Web 2.0 technologies in Talis Aspire, bringing lecturers closer to their students’ needs and concerns. Talis Aspire’s modern uncluttered environment will appeal to today’s students who can organise their resources in a way that suits their individual learning styles.

Looking towards the future

Once the University of Manchester has rolled out Talis Aspire ready for the start of the next academic year, the full benefits of broader initiatives around resource lists can be unleashed. A high-profile project, aimed at further enhancing the student experience, is digitising the top twenty textual resources from every resource list in the institution. Talis Aspire will enable the library to identify those core resources systematically, then deliver the digitised resources to students in diverse ways such as on e-readers.

Nottingham Trent University also has its eye fixed firmly on the future, and having made the decision to open its resource list data to other Talis Aspire institutions, anticipates the full benefits of accessing the knowledgebase of other institutions’ lists that will grow with the product.

Both universities are happy to join the growing number of Talis Aspire early adopters who work closely with Talis to meet the needs of their libraries, their academics and their students. As Mike Berrington, Deputy University Librarian (Customer Services) at Nottingham Trent University says, “It’s early days, but so far we like Talis Aspire very much and we’re confident that the company will be taking our requirements fully into account. We will be using the many measures of student satisfaction in place at the university to gauge the success of Talis Aspire in enhancing the experiences of students and academics with learning resource lists.”

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