

The *Lista APDIS Online*: a new vision for an existent service

Sílvia C. Lopes^{1,2}, Susana Henriques^{1,3}

¹ APDIS – Portuguese Association of Health Science Documentation and Information

² University of Lisbon, Faculty of Pharmacy, Lisbon, Portugal

³ University of Lisbon, Faculty of Medicine, Lisbon, Portugal

Abstract

The Lista APDIS Online (LAO) is a platform for scientific journals in Portuguese health science libraries launched in 2002, allowing efficiency in Inter-library loan services, journals searching, copy requests and their management among institutions. The evolution to a new version was essential. To develop and implement this new platform, the workflow of technical development was defined and the processes of upgrade and migration from the previous to the new database planned. Besides all functionalities of the previous version, the new version has a new database structure, a renewed layout, the ability for libraries to update their contents and the existence of a user workstation allowing catalog search and requests. Success is predictable by over 1600 orders in only 5 months.

Key words: APDIS Online List; health libraries; cooperation; journal articles.

Introduction

The APDIS – Portuguese Association of Health Information and Documentation, is a non-profit organization, formed in 1991 comprising health information professionals, contributing to research, education and development of health care in Portugal. From all APDIS available services, the *Lista APDIS Online – LAO* (APDIS Online List) is one of the most relevant. The LAO is a platform for scientific journals in libraries and documentation services in the health sciences domain, cooperating with APDIS, allowing for greater efficiency in Inter-library loan services, journals searching, copy requests and their management among institutions. Launched in 2002 and developed by BookMARC to APDIS, it is a landmark in the history of health libraries in Portugal, promoting new dynamics in cooperation between services, and allowing them to provide scientific production access, in a more efficient way (1). The evolution to a new LAO reflects a natural adaptation imposed by technological advances, which allowed a greater responsiveness to new challenges. Moreover, in addition to technical issues, it should be noted that the high costs of managing and maintaining the previous LAO version also constituted a strong factor to rethink the hiring and maintenance model of this service, making it more rational in terms of financial investment.

Methods

Requirements for the new version of LAO were identified. Based on the needs, Active Media Solutions

(<http://www.activemedia.pt>) redesigned the new platform using the Agile Software

Development methodology, which allows the development of a conceptual management framework to software engineering projects.

This methodology allows working through interactions, where each increment follows this workflow: planning, analysis of software requirements, specification, software architecture, implementation (or coding), testing and documentation. Concerning web design and usability, wireframes or prototypes of pages were made using Balsamiq mockups. Photoshop was used to design the final model. To evaluate usability and analyze consistency of communication throughout the pages, the model was tested, setting it in sequential images. The Web design was the next step. Wordpress was used (version 3.8), with the required developments, such as Content Management System (CMS). The programming languages used were HTML5 and CSS3, PHP and JSON and the database was MySQL.

Libraries which were part of the previous LAO version updated their contents. All the updated content received until December 2012 was included in the old platform. BookMARC provided the contents, libraries and historical data. Only contents and libraries data were migrated to the new platform in XML format. Updates

Address for correspondence: Sílvia Lopes, Faculdade de Farmácia da Universidade de Lisboa, Av. Prof. Gama Pinto, 1649-003 Lisbon, Portugal. E-mail: slopes@ff.ul.pt. Tel. +351 21 794 64 84, Ext. 14416

received after December 2012 were added manually by APDIS. Tests were performed to the platform which resulted in minor corrections and adjustments and help menus were prepared. Standardization and quality management of the database (at the bibliographic contents and libraries' data level) was initiated. The second testing phase took place after the new LAO was launched, and libraries were asked to report all difficulties occurred.

Results

The new LAO, launched at middle of September 2013, features a new database structure and a totally renewed layout (Figure 1).

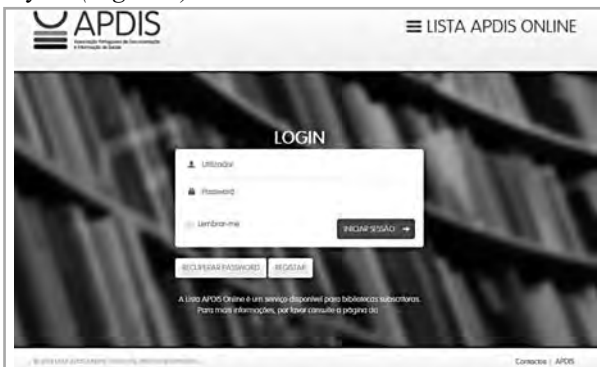


Fig. 1. New image of LAO homepage

Regarding available features, it can still search and locate journals in the Portuguese health libraries' catalogs (Figure 2), manage requests for papers among institutions (Figure 3), as in the previous version.

In this new version, among other features, libraries can update their own contents (Figures 4, 5); there are two separate workstations: one for librarians (search, cataloging and requests management), other for users (catalog search and requests); a new reports and statistics module (which allows Excel data import and automatic generation of LAO usage graphs).



Fig. 2. Search tools (simple search, advanced search and index)



Fig. 3. Requests Management tools



Fig. 4. Content management tools – Journal's list

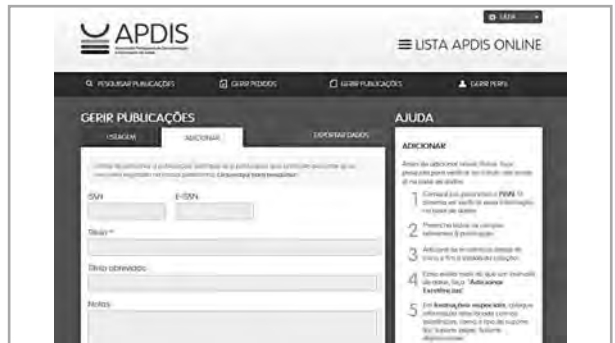


Fig. 5. Content management tools – Add new publication

Number of Journal's Titles	
Automatically Imported	10671
Entered manually by APDIS	95
Entered by Libraries	159
- Approved by APDIS	8
- Drafts (waiting to approve)	151
Total	10925

Fig. 6. Number of journal's titles registered in the LAO

Concerning the content and use of the platform, 10,671 journals were automatically imported. 95 journals were

manually entered (due to late updating). After the launch, between September and February, 159 titles were entered, 151 of them still as “drafts” (Figures 6, 7). The platform has now 275 users’ registries (Figure 8): 45 subscribing libraries (equivalent to 90 active registries, 45 to librarians and 45 to final users) and 176 cooperating libraries (that share their contents but do not use LAO). And there are still 9 libraries pending (from merged and closed Institutions).

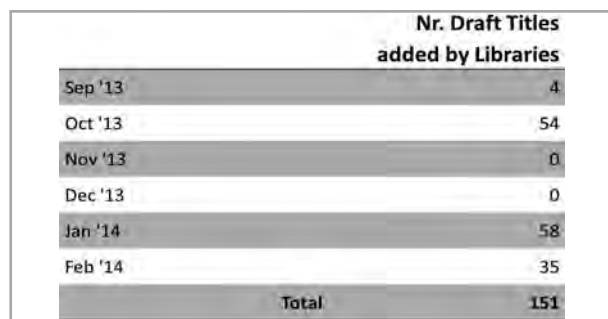


Fig. 7. Monthly distribution of draft titles added by libraries

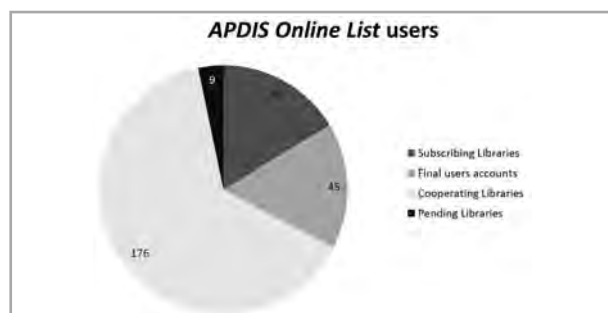


Fig. 8. APDIS Online List users

Regarding the new platform usage, between 18 September, 2013 and 22 February, 2014, 1657 copy requests were made (Figure 9).

Discussion

The absence of quality control criteria in the previous system database originated a great number of duplications in journal titles (repeated titles that were entered in a different way, different titles with the same ISSN, wrong ISSN attribution). On the other hand, the lack of information on abbreviated titles, ISSN and E-ISSN make it harder to search data and find duplicated information as well. Concerning this situation, in the

References

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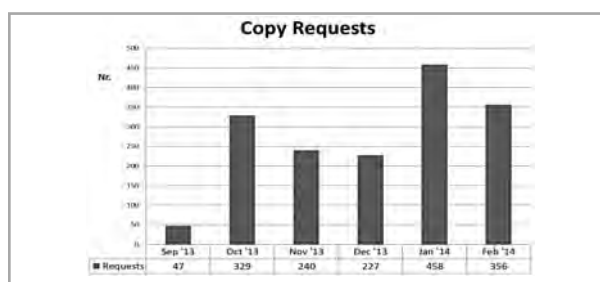


Fig. 9. Copy requests made at LAO

first phase, new titles added by libraries were limited, and kept as “drafts” until APDIS validation. Libraries are only free to update the status of their journals items (open, closed, extinct and year). Several errors were detected regarding the types and characterization of libraries. So it is very important that all libraries update their data (name, contacts, acronyms, address). APDIS must be informed about merges, extinctions, or other changes in the institutions, as well as the implications of such modifications in their journal collections.

The major difficulties reported by libraries are due to, the use of Internet Explorer version 8. The new LAO uses modern technology and older versions of IE do not support some of them. Thus, using IE version 9 or above was advised, or, alternately, Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox. Journal search improvements were the other most mentioned aspect.

Conclusion

The development and implementation of the new APDIS Online List has made available a set of new features that were long considered necessary. It also made it possible to know the volume of data involved in the process, as well as the gaps in the database. With the new LAO, we were able to create a safer system allowing a clearer contents management. The new LAO brings about a more efficient cooperation among libraries. In spite of all the work that has been carried out, the new LAO is an ever-evolving service which requires continuity regarding new and efficient features. Thus, in the short term, the quality of the database is to be reviewed. To manage quality and normalize procedures in the APDIS Online List, workgroups should be formed. At the same time, it is essential to train users to work with the platform.

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