Ex Libris

SFX in use around the world

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Make the Logical Link

"If information resources and services are the bricks of the digital library, SFX is the mortar that holds the bricks together. Currently, users are expected to be aware of and to keep track of all relevant resources available to them. At best, they waste time. At worst, they miss out on crucial information. With SFX, librarians have the power to give the digital library a customized architecture, within which users are guided intuitively towards all appropriate resources."

Eric F. Van de Velde, Ph.D.
Director of Library Information Technology
California Institute of Technology

S·F·X
CONTEXT SENSITIVE LINKING

SFX®—the original link server—delivering powerful linking services in the scholarly information environment

SFX—Getting Connected

The SFX link server offers libraries a proven solution for linking their diverse, ever-increasing set of electronic resources. SFX provides the robustness, flexibility, and independence for libraries to define links that help their users navigate to the resources and services relevant to their search results, including services such as the desktop delivery of journal articles or e-books. Reference librarians can choose appropriate content from a range of information providers and interconnect this content as desired. Using the Web-based administration interface with the SFX knowledge base, librarians select and set the targets of the links only once for all information resources, a process that eliminates duplication of effort.

For users whose institutions have an SFX server, an SFX button appears along with each retrieved library-defined reference—whether the resource is hosted locally by the institution or remotely by a third party. The user is a single click away from an SFX menu that offers a number of services relevant for that reference. For even more transparent navigation, the librarian can configure SFX so that users bypass the menu and jump directly to the full text, when available. With SFX, links are consistent across resources and always appropriate to the user's research areas and affiliation.
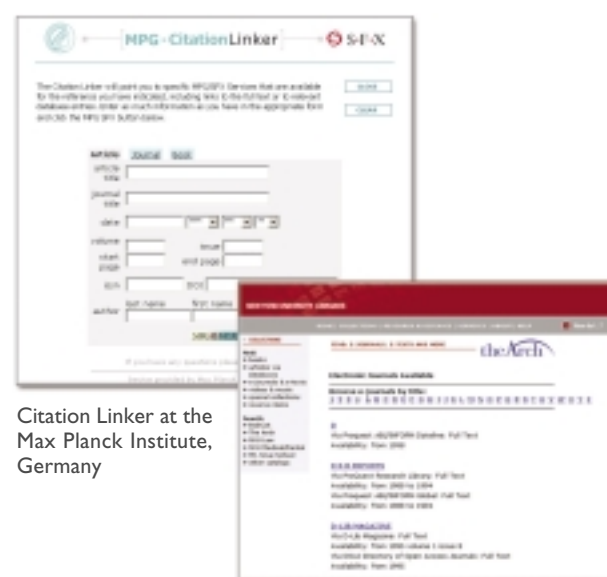
SFX—Expanding Research Horizons

SFX extends the concept of linking well beyond a method of retrieving the full text of an article. While the delivery of full text to the desktop represents a major advance of recent years and offers a key service to researchers, SFX enables librarians to call up many additional services that apply to their users. For example, if the full text of an article is not available electronically, the user can seamlessly check the library catalog for print holdings or make a document-delivery or interlibrary-loan request. Other potential targets include patent information services, citation services, searches in Web-based databases, and more. Librarians can choose from predefined targets or develop their own.

For a list of predefined SFX targets, see
http://www.exlibrisgroup.com/sfx_targets.htm.

SFX—More Than Just a Link Server

The SFX Web-based administration tool makes it easy for libraries to use rules stored in the comprehensive SFX knowledge base to set up and maintain relevant linking services. Once configured for local linking needs, SFX can serve as a library's central repository for e-journal information.

- SFX offers Citation Linker, a Web form that can be embedded in the library's Web site and serve as an interface for locating e-journal information.

- SFX generates a customizable alphabetical journal title list for the library's Web site.

- In conjunction with the Ex Libris MARCit! service, SFX can optionally provide MARC records for loading into a library catalog or into MetaLib®, the Ex Libris library portal.

- SFX can check unmediated document-delivery requests against local holdings before patrons submit such requests.

- Through SFX, librarians can obtain uniform measures of use—crucial information for effective vendor-independent management of Web resources.

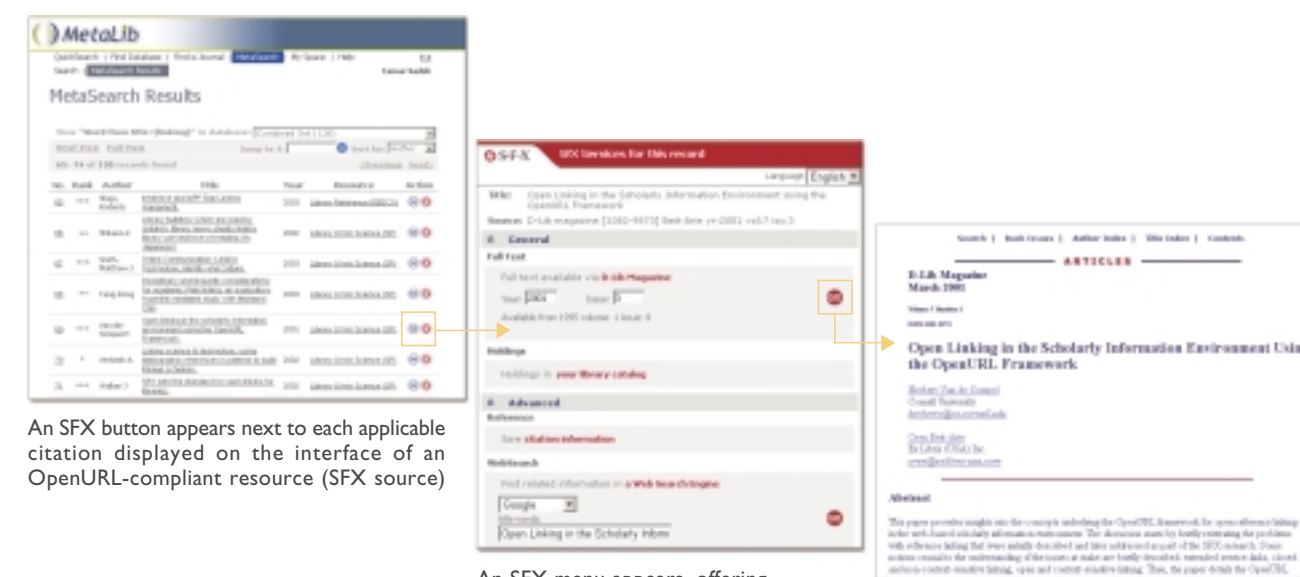Citation Linker at the Max Planck Institute, Germany

SFX journal title list at the New York University, USA

Did You Know?

- SFX is based on the OpenURL standard, originally developed by Oren Beit-Arie of Ex Libris and Herbert Van de Sompel.

  For more information on the OpenURL, see
  http://www.niso.org/committees/committee_ax.html.

- The SFX knowledge base is unrivaled in scope, with a comprehensive yet expandable set of sources and targets that go well beyond full text.

- SFX provides for batch activation of the knowledge base using local holding information received from established public access management services (PAMS) vendors.

- The SFX server can be installed locally or can be hosted by Ex Libris through the well-established SFX subscription service. Libraries choosing either of these solutions can subscribe, if desired, to the Ex Libris management service.

- Using the Web-based SFX administration module, librarians control their own SFX server and add institution-specific targets.

- SFX enables libraries to configure appropriate services on an institutional level or tailor them to groups and individuals. For example, services such as "get copyright clearance" can be offered to a library's technical service staff only, and unmediated document delivery services can be made available to graduate students and faculty members only.

- SFX is a stand-alone product that integrates easily with most major automated library systems, learning management systems, and institutional portals, as well as with the complete Ex Libris software suite.

- SFX is fully integrated with DOI and CrossRef.

- SFX is Unicode compliant.

- SFX supports the needs of single institutions and of a whole range of library consortium models.

- SFX is the linking server of choice of many libraries around the world.

  For the latest customer list, see
  www.exlibrisgroup.com.

An SFX button appears next to each applicable citation displayed on the interface of an OpenURL-compliant resource (SFX source)

An SFX menu appears, offering relevant services

The user selects a service and is linked to the appropriate target