

GALILEO, Georgia's Virtual Library for the 21st Century

In 1995, the University System of Georgia (USG) launched a visionary project to provide equal access to information and to improve the quality of library services for all Georgians. GALILEO (**GeorgiA Library LEarning Online**) is Georgia's award-winning virtual library of licensed, commercial databases and selected free Internet resources that offers access to thousands of full-text magazines, journals, encyclopedias, and electronic books to every Georgia citizen. Supported by Information Technology Services (ITS), GALILEO complements services of Georgia's libraries by providing premier electronic information (via **PeachNet**) to library users regardless of location and contributing to a more educated Georgia.

ACCESS FOR ALL

By collaborating and sharing resources, GALILEO benefits more than nine million user-constituents in Georgia wherever they are—school, home, library, or office. GALILEO serves more than 2,000 institutions including the USG, public K-12 schools, public libraries, technical colleges, a group of private academic colleges and universities, and a group of private K-12 schools.

GALILEO meets the following major objectives:

- Leverage funding for higher-level resources and services not otherwise obtainable by some libraries
- Work toward seamless integration with the USG's **Integrated Learning Environment**
- Provide methods to work with other learning management systems
- Offer training for librarians and users
- Team with librarians to increase awareness about GALILEO's benefits, particularly for K-12 schools, Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education colleges, and public libraries

OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS

- Universal access to core materials, including full-text books and journals, for learners of all ages and interests
- Usage increases of 1600% since inception in September, 1995, totaling over one billion total user experiences
- Continuous assessment-based improvement to user interfaces, including customizations for academic, K12, and public libraries
- Best-of-breed tools for simultaneous searching of multiple databases and discovery and linking among electronic journals

- Significant subscription and database cost avoidance for institutions and libraries
- Georgia Government Publications, a database of more than 35,000 full text digital publications
- Technical support for the New Georgia Encyclopedia, Georgia's first online encyclopedia
- Digital Library of Georgia, the online gateway to Georgia's history and culture in digitized books, manuscripts, photographs, government documents, newspapers, maps, audio, video, and more

COST AVOIDANCE

GALILEO provides a higher level of services for all Georgians at a lower cost than if all libraries tried to provide those services on their own. Thanks to resource and cost-sharing opportunities, Georgia libraries avoid spending many millions of dollars in annual costs and provide resources and services that would not otherwise be affordable. With GALILEO, all Georgians can access a bounty of information.

CHALLENGES

Libraries now operate in dynamic environments, including rapidly changing users, technology, and publishing models that create the following numerous challenges:

- Explosive growth of information available online
- New information technologies
- Increasing costs of electronic resources
- Increasing subscription costs from rising prices based on rising student enrollments
- Funding limitations

GALILEO's savvy users' expectations continue to grow; while significant improvements have been made to GALILEO in recent years, they expect more:

- Ease of use, convenience, and integration as experienced within other online environments (**Web 2.0**)
- Delivery of academic library services and content within the context of campus **portals**, online courses, faculty and library web sites, and portable devices
- Rich, interactive, and age-appropriate interfaces for young users.

In other words, how can GALILEO expand resources and services to catch up with the information and technology that users expect?

PeachNet is the statewide network that supports all information and instructional technology efforts for the USG and the Georgia Public Library Service (GPLS).

The **Integrated Learning Environment (ILE)** is the seamless operation of instructional and administrative functions of the University System of Georgia. See other side for examples.

A **portal** is a gateway to the Internet that may be specialized and customizable, e.g., Google, "My University," and my eBay. A portal often includes a search engine.

Web 2.0 is a collective description applied to the newest Web technologies, which capitalize on the convergence of browser-based software, dynamic interconnection of information, user creativity, and participation (FaceBook, MySpace, YouTube, Flickr, blogs, and wikis).

SOLUTIONS

GALILEO conducts continuous assessment practices through collection of user comments, surveys, focus groups, and usability testing of new interfaces. In this way, these next steps for improvement have been identified through consensus and will be validated through user feedback as they are developed:

- Tools for embedding content in library websites, online courseware, campus portals, and other environments
- Browser-based toolbar to allow users to search GALILEO without going to a particular website
- Video help and instruction at point-of-need
- Persistent folders for storage of personalized content and support of collaborative group work
- Additional enhancements to search and discovery features, including a more specialized interface for K-5 students

WHAT'S NEXT?

A Courseware and Website Library Resource Integration Tools Development project will provide customized GALILEO toolbars for GALILEO users, as well as tools

for content developers such as faculty, course designers, and librarians. In addition, efforts to enhance search and discovery include the implementation of a more specialized searching tool for academic libraries, ongoing participation in national next generation library system development activities, and the development of an improved children's interface.

GALILEO brings together a vast collection of learning resources that support education from K-12 to graduate and lifelong learning. With ITS's help, GALILEO fulfills a vital role in generating, collecting, and transmitting knowledge in our interconnected, interactive global society.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

To learn more about GALILEO, current projects, the Digital Library of Georgia, and the New Georgia Encyclopedia, see the following websites:

- www.galileo.usg.edu/
- www.usg.edu/galileo/about/planning/projects
- <http://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/>
- www.georgiaencyclopedia.org

GALILEO AND THE USG'S INTEGRATED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (ILE)

Libraries are central to teaching, learning, and research in the ILE, and GALILEO provides access to the libraries. The graphic shows some instructional and administrative functions and the enterprise technologies that must work together seamlessly in the ILE.



- Students must be recruited, admitted, and registered; they need access to books, e-mail, and the Internet; they must be able to take courses at multiple USG institutions and graduate.
- Students must receive financial aid and pay tuition, parking, and housing bills.
- Faculty and staff must have technological tools to teach, conduct research, and provide services.
- Those with visual, auditory, or motor impairments need full access to all on-line educational opportunities.
- Data for informed decision making and reporting must be collected.
- Technologies for learning in the classroom and on line, and for accessing library resources and student services throughout the state from anywhere must be robust, reliable, and secure.
- Faculty and staff must be compensated and receive benefit

