

GALILEO Assessment Overview

Executive Summary

GALILEO is dynamic, and for proper interpretation of data, the following must always be considered for the timeframe of interest: (1) number of institutional members and type of users, (2) number and type of databases available, and (3) current design and options of the web-based delivery system. To aid in assessment customized, sophisticated GALILEO usage data may be calculated online.

Guided by the Assessment Committee, four formal assessments have been conducted to date, with differing survey populations. Each provided valuable data and feedback for improvement. Assessment criteria are based on model assessment components from the University System of Georgia, "Assessment Model for Libraries." Eight variables were identified specifically for assessment of GALILEO: reliability, access, responsiveness, communication, understanding the customer, credibility, security, and cost benefit. Assessment data identified a number of concerns and recommended improvements, which have been addressed and are being monitored.

The most recent GALILEO assessment employed an online survey to solicit feedback from end users. Overall the positive results were very high across all six assessment criteria used, ranging from 89% (acceptable response time) to 96% (GALILEO is an effective service). At the time of these assessments, GALILEO was primarily used by academic libraries and a scattering of public libraries. With the explosion in the use of GALILEO among all types of Georgia libraries, future assessments will include a wide diversity of academic, public, K-12, and technical institution library users.

Future assessment plans are:

- Refine the online user survey;

- Administer the online survey at least annually;

- Encourage assessment by individual GALILEO sub-consortia groups, and by individual researchers under Assessment Committee guidance; and

- Expand and refine collection of data on the cost benefit of GALILEO.

I. Introduction

Background

The GALILEO Project (Georgia Library Learning Online), also known as, "A Vision for One Statewide Library," was initiated by the University System of Georgia (USG) librarians. There were eight components in the original project proposal, of which four relate specifically to the online system. For the purpose of this report,

"GALILEO" will refer to the online system; "GALILEO Project" will refer to all eight components of the original proposal.

To understand the context for GALILEO assessment, one must be aware that GALILEO was implemented in the following phases:

Phase I (September 21, 1995 - June 1996)

34 University System of Georgia institutions

Phase II (July 1996 - June 1997)

56 public libraries (regional headquarters)

4 technical institutes

41 private college/university institutions

Phase III (July 1997 - date)

01 additional public libraries

80 public school districts (representing 1,800+ K-12 schools)

Assessment

Usage statistics have been available for GALILEO from the beginning. Important and valuable data are available online where users can request number of searches and full text retrievals by date range and by institution.

Formal GALILEO assessments have been conducted to date, as follows:

1.	USG library directors baseline survey	October 1995
2.	Re-administered initial survey	October 1996
3.	USG library staff survey	February 1997
4.	Online survey of GALILEO users	April 1997

The baseline and followup surveys (administered in 1995 and 1996) provided valuable data and feedback for improvement of GALILEO. The USG library directors were very pleased with GALILEO overall, but identified issues of concern and specific areas for improvement.

A slight modification was made to the original survey instrument, and questionnaires were distributed (in 1997) to libraries of the USG for distribution to those staff who had the most contact with GALILEO. Credible search results was ranked as the most essential variable, and was the second highest rated variable.

The most recent component of GALILEO assessment includes soliciting feedback from the ultimate customers: the students, faculty and staff of the USG, as well as non-USG users who have access to core GALILEO databases. This was the first time GALILEO mounted an online survey. The number of voluntary responses was gratifying, with 543 usable replies received during the six-day survey period in April 1997. Responses were designed to be passed to a database program; preliminary analysis of responses indicate satisfaction with GALILEO, as 85 percent would recommend it to a friend. The online survey instrument asked users to identify themselves by user type, institutional affiliation, and frequency of GALILEO use. The respondents were asked to reply "yes," "no," or "usually" to six statements concerning GALILEO. Given the opportunity to suggest improvements, 180 provided open ended comments; most often mentioned were: make it easier to use, provide more full text, and improve response time.

II. Usage Statistics

Sophisticated usage statistics are available for GALILEO, providing valuable information in the aggregate and by institution. These data are freely available from the GALILEO homepage, under "About GALILEO". Here any user may request a report be calculated by selected timeframe and specific institution(s) and selected type of search(es). Summary data demonstrate a dramatic increase in usage:

Timeframe	Searches	Full Text
September 1995 - June 1996	1,362,952	853,985
July 1996 - June 1997	3,523,269	1,481,153
July 1997 - June 1998	6,442,241	2,186,532

III. Methodology

Assessment criteria are based on model assessment components from the "Assessment Model for Libraries," adopted by the USG library directors in 1994. The criteria incorporate variables, use data, and critical incident methodology. For the GALILEO Project assessment, the Model includes:

- mission
- system planning
- GALILEO planning
- collections
- organization
- staff
- services

facilities

administration

fiscal planning

Variables identified specifically for assessment of the GALILEO online component include:

reliability

access

responsiveness

communication

understanding/knowing the customer

credibility

security

cost benefit

IV. Summary of the Data

Surveys 1 & 2: USG Directors

Return rate

1995 (21 out of 34) 62%

1996 (33 out of 34) 97%

Online GALILEO system does a good job

1996 (33 out of 33 = yes) 100%

Essential Scores

To determine which elements were considered essential to the success of GALILEO, eleven elements were surveyed; ten were considered essential. The respondents then rated the ten essential GALILEO elements on how well they were being accomplished.

Reliability was ranked the most essential variable (a 4.94 mean on a scale of 1-5), but had the lowest rating (a 3.39 on a scale of 1-5)

Cost/value benefit was tied for the most essential variable (a 4.94 mean), and had the highest rating (4.82)

Asked to identify the most positive outcomes and most critical problems for three separate user groups, the library directors submitted free text comments; categorized below are the most cited, in rank order:

Positive Outcomes--Library Users

1995	1996
access to resources	access to resources
access to web/full text availability	full text availability

Critical Problems--Library Users

1995	1996
technical problems/ reliability	down time/reliability
Learning curve/training of users	slowness/response time

Positive Outcomes--Library Faculty/Staff

1995	1996
new/more resources	expanded access to new resources
variety of responses	new equipment/new technologies

Critical Problems--Library Faculty/Staff

1995	1996
trouble shooting/ technical problems	reliability
training users	training librarians/users

When asked to identify one addition or change they would recommend for GALILEO, the following responses were received from the USG library directors:

Add or Change One Thing

1995	1996
more full text	more full text
change scope buttons	additional databases
abuse of access	abuse of access

Survey 3: USG Library Faculty/Staff

Return rate = Not Applicable (distributed to all library faculty and staff "who had the most contact with GALILEO")

237 usable surveys received, from library and classified staff (35.98% in the reference area)

library types were representative of the USG:

34.29% Research/Regional universities

30.00% 4-year institutions

25.71% 2-year institutions

10.00% not identifiable

Online GALILEO system does a good job

(208 of 211 = yes) 98.58%

Essential Scores

Credible search results (96.92%) and reliability (96.04%) were ranked as the most essential variables. Credible search results had the second-highest rating (84.00%), but reliability had the second-lowest rating (62.00%).

Survey 4: Online Survey of GALILEO Users (USG +)

Return rate = Not Applicable (User option: survey available for each user connecting April 9-14, 1997) (543 usable responses received)

Overall the positive responses are very high across all six assessment criteria (ranging from 89 to 96%). The percentage of negative responses is small (ranging from 4 to 11%). Analysis of data seems to indicate that regardless of some dissatisfaction with system response time, the vast majority of GALILEO users (85%) would recommend the system to a friend.

Respondents were definitely pleased with GALILEO's effectiveness (77%) and that it always saved the respondent time (64%). They were less satisfied with response time (41%) and its ease of use (58%). Respondents said that GALILEO results usually or always met the respondent's information needs 93% of the time. Analysis of survey open-ended comments reveals that most often mentioned were: make it easier to use, provide more full text, and improve response time.

V. Future Assessment Plans

The Assessment Committee is refining the online user survey to adapt it to the expanded GALILEO user base and to allow for more specificity in responses by use of a Likert scale. It is proposed that data be collected annually or semiannually using the online survey.

Efforts are underway to expand and refine collection of data on the cost benefit of GALILEO. The Assessment Committee is designing a form for collecting information to compare costs and benefits with and without GALILEO. The aim will be to collect as much of the data as possible centrally without asking individual libraries to supply it.

Assessment efforts by individual sub-consortia groups within the GALILEO consortium will be encouraged. By use of common data elements and assessment strategies, data can be easily aggregated and combined for assessment input from the entire user base. Individual researchers will be encouraged to conduct assessment projects, under Committee guidance.