



MassCat Musings - September 2014

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Changes

In the April 2014 issue of MassCat Musings I wrote

“If you’ve used an ISBN search [and click on the Z39.50 button], the 10 or 13-digit number will automatically be filled into the ISBN box. If you see the number in the Title box instead, that means there is something wrong and it is not a true ISBN. A digit may have been added or left out, or two digits may have been reversed.”

Guess what! There have been changes made to the Koha system and now the ISBN is always filled into the Title box. What to do? Simply highlight the ISBN, cut it from the Title box (CTRL-X) and paste it into the ISBN box (CTRL-V). Not as easy as having it pop into the correct box, but that’s how it works for now.

Sometimes Less Is More

In general, when searching via Z39.50, use as few search terms as you can. If the number of hits is too unwieldy, then add a term or two until you get the number down to a manageable size.

There are several good reasons for using fewer terms:

1. The less typing, the less chance of a typo.
2. The more indexes the system has to search, the longer the search will take.
3. The more words there are to search, the higher the probability that there will be a difference between your search and potential matches, which means you won’t find them. For example, if you search the Author “Jance, J.A.”, you will be treated to the message “Nothing found. Try another search.” That’s because her official name in the author field of a bibliographic record is “Jance, Judith A.”: By searching only the last name “Jance” you avoid such variations.

While you may have to do a little more work moving the ISBN to the appropriate box, you can do a little less typing for Z-searches in general.