Effective Library Web Sites: How To Ask Your Users What Will Work For Them

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Overview

- Background
  - Purpose Statement
  - Literature Search
- Methodologies
- Testing
- Data Analysis
- Conclusions

Background

WSU Vancouver Library

- Item Delivery Request Forms Now Available Online
  Select "Library Services" from below.

  General Information
  Who is who and what is what in the WSUV Library.

  Library Resources
  Search our catalog and databases, connect to internet resources and find out about area libraries.

  Library Services
  Find out what the library faculty and staff can do for you.

WSU | UV Library | Services | Resources | Contact | T.R.C.
Purpose Statement

Does the current organization of the WSUV library’s web site and the vocabulary used within it make it possible for novice and expert users to easily locate the information that they need?

Literature Search

- Rubin, Handbook of Usability Testing
- Fowler, Appendix B: Usability Tests
- Fredrickson-Mele, Evaluating Web Site Structure
- Nielsen, SunWeb

Methodologies

- Focus Groups
- Site Usage Logs
- Cognitive Walkthrough
- Card Sort
- Category Membership Expectation
- Questionnaire
Methodologies
Card Sort

Category Membership Expectation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Category</th>
<th>Contents of Category (What you would expect/want to find)</th>
<th>Suggested Name for Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Study Rooms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methodologies

Questionnaire

Survey of Reference Staff

Participant #
Date: 

1. Is there information that you would like to find on the WSUV Library's web pages that is not there? If so, please list it.

2. What is the best feature of the WSUV Library’s web pages?

3. Circle the number that best describes your experience when you use the WSUV Library’s web pages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I can always find what I need</th>
<th>I can never find what I need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Testing

- Participants
  - Types
  - Numbers
- Incentive
- Script
- Call for Participants
Data Analysis

Card Sort

- 7 of 8 participants thought there should be a faculty resources category
- More participants wanted help documentation grouped with specific databases
- 2 of the 8 participants had 10 links on the front page and 4 participants had 2-3 links on the front page
- 4 of 8 participants wanted the Document Delivery forms to be near the databases

Data Analysis

Category Membership

- What should be added to the web site
  - Pictures of the staff
  - Links to email account information
  - Checkout periods
- What is confusing about the current site
  - Subject Trees
  - Best of Lists
  - Library Reserves

Data Analysis

Questionnaire

- What is best about the current site
- What is worst about the current site
- What should be within 2 clicks of the homepage
Conclusions

Difficulties

• Novice vs Expert

• Card Sort
  – Difficult to extract data
  – Difficult to discern trends

• Category Membership
  – Difficult to expand

Advantages

• Card Sort
  – Expandable
  – Easy to create and administer

• Category Membership
  – Easy to discern trends and similarities

• Questionnaire
  – Easy to analyze

In conclusion

As you begin to design and conduct usability tests, start slowly with small simple studies, until you gain the necessary experience and confidence to expand further. Above all, remember that the essence of usability engineering is clear seeing, appreciation of detail, and trust in the ability of your future customers to guide your hand, if you will only let them.

-- Jeffrey Rubin, Handbook of Usability Testing
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Complete instruments and bibliography available at:
http://www.vancouver.wsu.edu/fac/diller/evalweb.htm