Putting Student Input to Work: Using Low-Tech Methods to Gather Feedback on a New Technology

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USAIGN 2008
Overview

• Timeline
• Current screenshots
• Usability testing details
• Usability testing highlights
• Focus group details
• Focus group highlights
**“Search It” Timeline**

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<th>Activity</th>
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<td>January – June 2006</td>
<td>Customization</td>
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<td>June 5, 2006</td>
<td>Implementation</td>
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find articles on your topic
find books and other materials
find a known article
find course reserves
find isu digital collections

Announcements

Elsevier ScienceDirect Web Editions - posted 4/1/08
Elsevier's ScienceDirect has discontinued online access to its Web Editions (current issues of subscribed journals) as of March 31, 2008. Milner Library will be investigating other options for access. Access to content from 1994 or earlier is still available for subjects for which Milner has purchased backfiles.

Enter the Milner Library Poster Contest - posted 3/5/08
for a chance to win a Dick Blick gift certificate. More information is available regarding eligibility, design criteria, and prize details. Deadline for submission is April 11, 2008.
Milner Library Database Page

Databases & Article Indexes

Includes online periodicals.

Databases by subject:
- Select a subject

Databases by title: Select a database or index
- Go to database
- Describe database

Or Search 12 Selected Library Resources Simultaneously.

Online journals, magazines, and newspapers:
If you have an article citation and want full text, try Citation Linker.
- Journal title: [Field] 〇 Starts with 〇 Contains 〇 Exact [Find It]
Usability Testing Details

• Goals
  – Learn how users might use Search It
  – Study Search It’s ease of use for new users

• Planning
  – Complete Institutional Review Board paperwork
  – Recruit & select volunteers

• Execution
  – 1 participant & 2 facilitators per session
  – 5 research scenarios
    • Observed participants actions on projected screen
    • Asked participants to think aloud
  – 6 debriefing questions
Usability Testing Details

• Scenarios/Questions
  – See http://www.library.ilstu.edu/page/1199

• Participants
  – 4 Undergraduate Students & 3 Graduate Students
  – 4 Males & 3 Females
  – 1 Science, 6 Social Sciences & 0 Humanities
Usability Testing Highlights

• Quick Search Box
  – *Feedback*: No participants realized that Quick Search box only included 12 resources.
  – *Action*: Revised subheading to say, “Search 12 Selected Library Resources Simultaneously”

• Library Catalog
  – *Feedback*: No participants used the “Include Milner Catalog” option on Advanced Search page.
  – *Action*: Automatically included the library catalog in most categories and subcategories.
Milner Library Old Advanced Search
Milner Library New Advanced Search
Focus Group Details

• Goals
  – Gather students’ input on
    • Their use of Search It
    • Their satisfaction with Search It
    • Their ideas on integrating Search It into the library’s website

• Planning
  – Complete Institutional Review Board paperwork
  – Recruit & select volunteers

• Execution
  – 2-6 participants, 1 facilitator & 1-2 recorders
  – Series of questions to guide discussion
Focus Group Details

• Questions
  – See http://www.library.ilstu.edu/page/1199

• Participants
  – 10 Undergraduate Students & 8 Graduate Students
  – 7 Males & 11 Females
  – 6 Science, 11 Social Sciences & 1 Humanities

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Focus Group Highlights

Use

• Frequency
  – Use often: 11 (61%)
    5 undergrad & 6 grads
  – Use occasionally: 7 (39%)
    5 undergrads & 2 grads

• Why participants use Search It rather than something else
  – Faster/easier/less confusing
  – Good beginning point

After two years on campus, participant doesn't understand “the different database thing.”
Focus Group Highlights

Use

• Change in Research Process
  – Some changed little because they preferred familiar tools
  – Some changed because it broadened their horizons
  – Some changed because it allowed them to easily find reliable sources
  – Some do not give up on library research as quickly now.

  “Still like to go with what I was taught as a freshman.”

  “…it’s broadened my perspective on what articles I can find in what databases.”

  “This whole concept of Search It is like their equivalent Academic Google…”
Focus Group Highlights
Satisfaction

• Likes
  – Broaden their horizons
• Dislikes
  – Placement of Quick Search box on library’s homepage
  – Reliability/logic of the results
• Helped with Assignment/Research
  – 9 of 12 respondents said Search It helped

“A lot of time the word I put in, it brings up off the wall topics.”

“For me it has. I'm doing comprehensive literature reviews. It's a great way to say ‘have I gotten everything?’”
Focus Group Highlights
Website Integration

• Participants did not like placement on homepage
  – Right-hand column
  – Colors
• Most common suggestion was to move it above/below the 5 main options on the homepage

“As far as the placement on the website, goes, I find it could be better... It’s almost like it’s a calendar event which is something not here to stay.... That green background kind of puts it in the background...”
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Questions?

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