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

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USAIN 2008

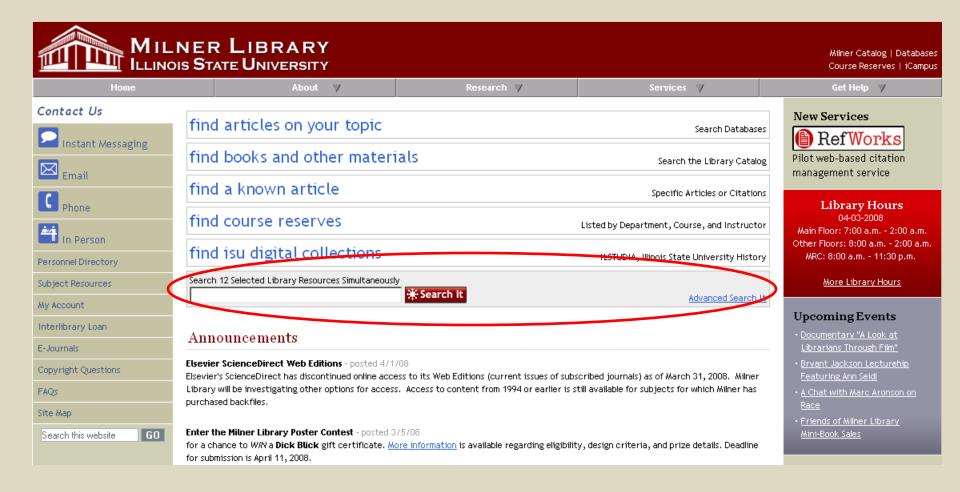
Overview

- Timeline
- Current screenshots
- Usability testing details
- Usability testing highlights
- Focus group details
- Focus group highlights

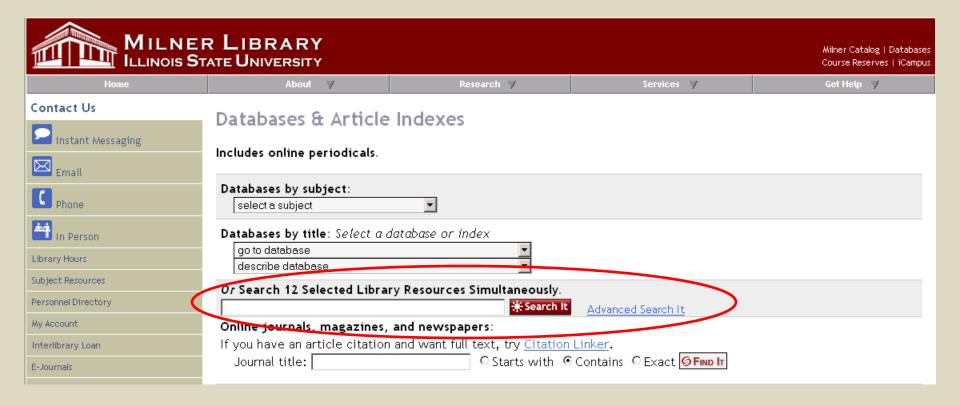
"Search It" Timeline

January – June 2006	Customization
June 5, 2006	Implementation
August 2006	Usability Testing
June & September 2007	Focus Groups

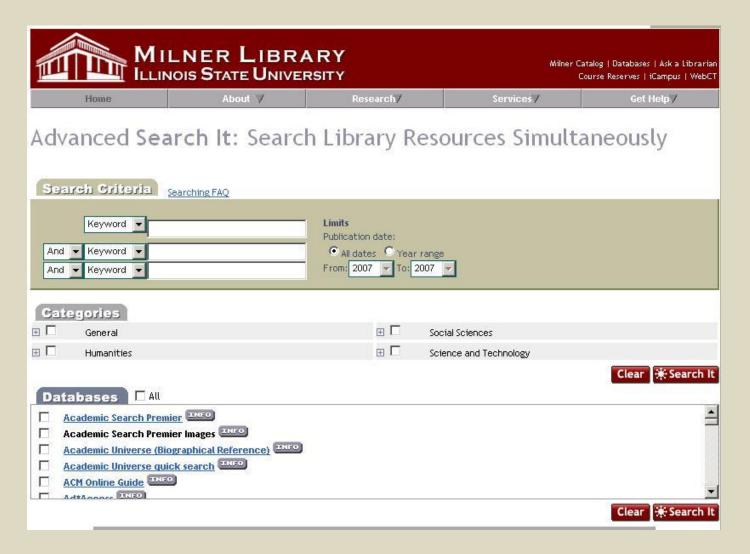
Milner Library Homepage



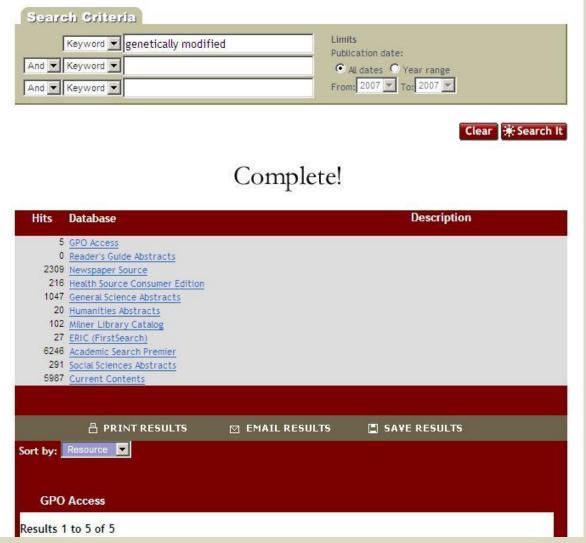
Milner Library Database Page



Milner Library Advanced Search



Milner Library Results Page



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

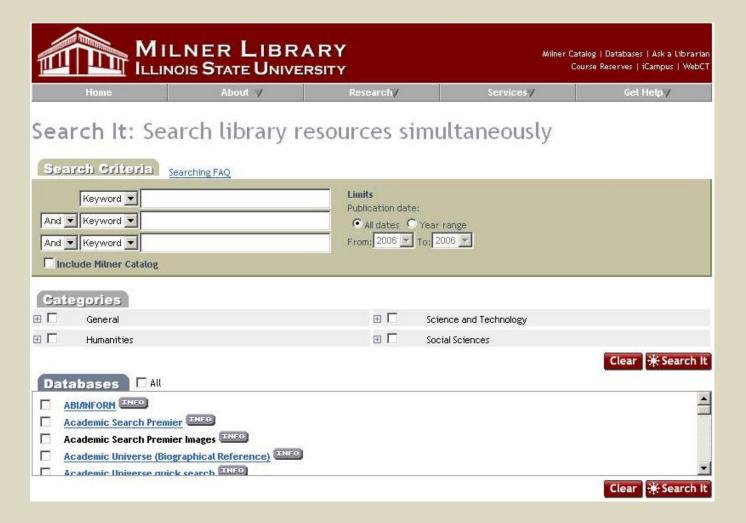
Quick Search Box

- Feedback: No participants realized that Quick
 Search box only included 12 resources.
- Action: Revised subheading to say, "Search 12
 Selected Library Resources Simultaneously"

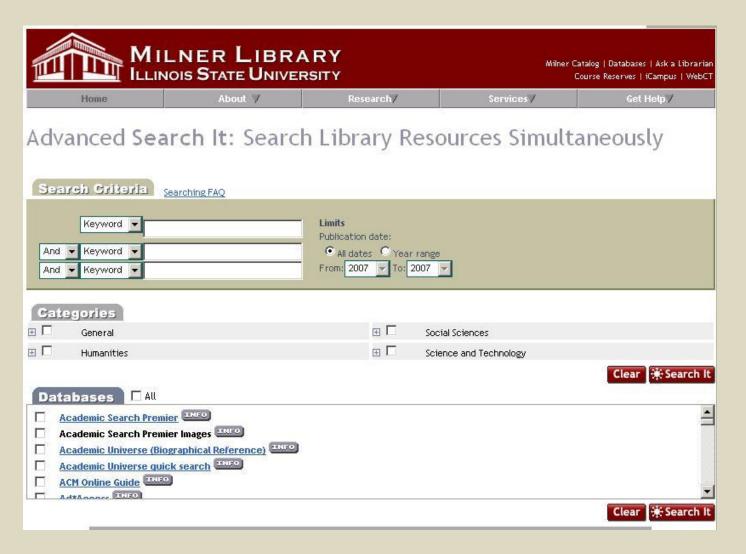
Library Catalog

- 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

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."

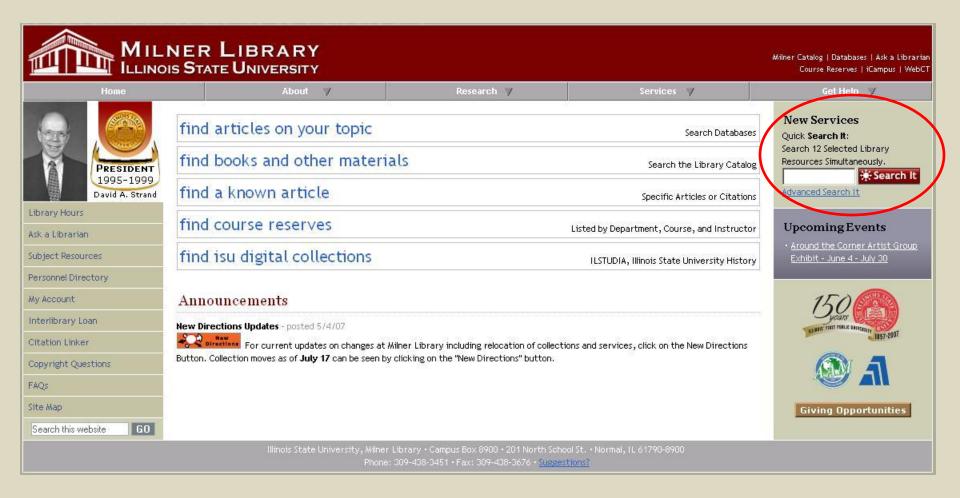
"For me it has. I'm doing comprehensive literature reviews. It's a great way to say 'have I gotten everything?"

Focus Group Highlights Website Integration

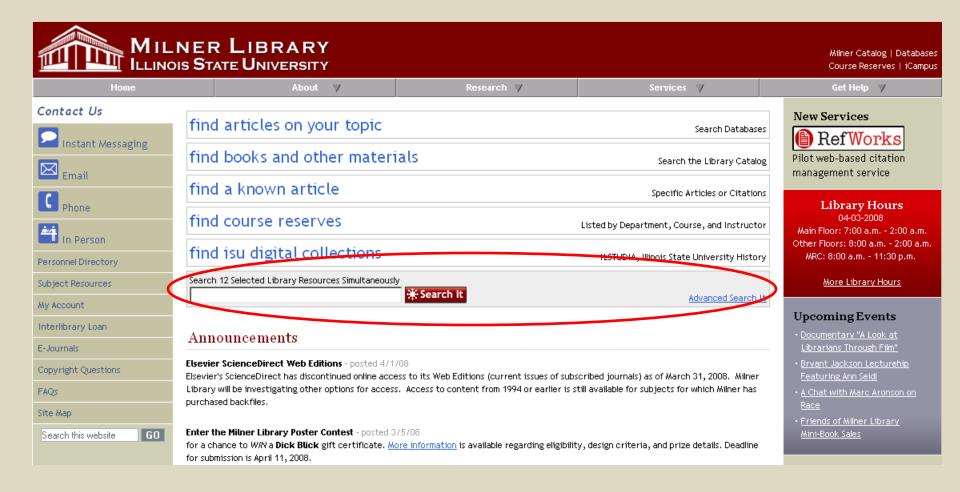
- Participants did not like placement on homepage
 - Right-hand column
 - Colors
- Most common suggestion was to move it above/below the 5 main options on the homepage

"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..."

Milner Library Old Homepage



Milner Library New Homepage



Questions?

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