Usability Beyond the Home Page: Bringing Usability into the Technical Services Workflow

Kate Hill, UNC Greensboro
● What is Usability
● Why in Technical Services?
● Types of User Testing
● Tips for starting
● A Case Study!
Poll Time!
Head of Sciences Spaces & User Experience
University of Colorado Boulder Libraries – Boulder, CO, United States

less than an hour ago

Program Manager, Discovery & User Experience
Orbis Cascade Alliance – Eugene, OR, United States

1 day ago
Usability = qualitative and quantitative data
Usability=Action Items and Empathy
Tech Services understand access and discovery
We have a broad picture
We know who to talk to and how (vendors!)
Choosing Users

Photo by Julie Larsen Maher
(Associated Press)
Facilitation suggestions
Classic Usability Tests

Questions to ask:
1. Have you used any of these 3 links located within the “Help Box”? (Chat with a Librarian, Research Help, or How do I...)  
2. If so, do you remember why you used the link?  
3. Without actually using the link, what would you expect to find when you click on “Chat with a Librarian”?  
4. What would you expect to find when you click on “Research Help”?  
5. What would you expect to find when you click on “How do I...”?  

[Website screenshot showing a library website with a help box and options like Chat with a Librarian, Research Help, and How do I...]
Types of Data

Performance Data:

Task took 45 seconds to complete on average

6/8 participants took six clicks to get to the right link

Preference Data:

Students commented that they liked the second option due to the amount of white space and cleanliness of design
Heuristic Testing

Ten Usability Heuristics by Jakob Nielsen

1. Visibility of system status
   - Give the users appropriate feedback about what is going on.

2. Match between system and the real world
   - Use real-world words, concepts, and conventions familiar to the users in a natural and logical order.

3. Error prevention
   - Prevent errors by eliminating error-prone actions, unduly complex actions, and artifacts such as syntax.

4. Consistency and standards
   - Follow platform conventions through consistent words, situations, and actions.

5. Aesthetic and minimalist design
   - Don’t show redundant or unnecessary information. Include only pertinent information that is visible to the effect.

6. Flexibility and efficiency of use
   - Make the system efficient for different experiences, especially for short or infrequent tasks.

7. Recognize rather than recall
   - Make objects, actions, and options visible at the appropriate time to minimize users’ memory load and facilitate recognition.

8. Help and documentation
   - Make necessary help and documentation easy to find and worth reading.

9. Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors
   - Express error messages in plain language. Avoid cryptic codes and jargon. Fix the problem and suggest solutions.

10. Aesthetics and minimalist design
    - Don’t show redundant or unnecessary information. Include only pertinent information that is visible to the effect.

Developed by João Machini,
https://ebinterfaces.wordpress.com/2014/03/04/evaluation-heuristic-analysis/
# Card Sorting

2015 Study Card Sort #1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups (4):</th>
<th>Cards (23, listed in order of importance):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essential</td>
<td>Library Catalog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Borrow, Renew &amp; Order Materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice to have</td>
<td>Research Guides by Subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I never use</td>
<td>About Us/Chat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contact the Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interlibrary Loan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Journal A-Z List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Libraries &amp; Collections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Library Spaces/Reserve a Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Location of Materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Help with Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Announcements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My Library Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>About the Libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Calendars</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tutorials &amp; Workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schedule Classes and Tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friends/Events/Giving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blogs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A/B Comparison
Prototype Testing
Inspirations


Getting into the UX world
Start Small

Questions to ask:

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5. What would you expect to find when you click on “How do I...”? 
Share your work

- DE Librarian
- ERM Librarian
- Web Librarian
- Help Box
- ROI
- Web Team
- Assessment
Make it a pilot

Drawing by The Locked,
https://www.deviantart.com/thelocked/art/flying-red-panda-313343697
Life (and UX) lessons

- Start Small
- Find your allies
- Why you? Why Tech Services?
- Collaborate
- Educate others
- Share it out
Worksheet Time
A Case Study: Libguides and Database A-Z Testing
The Problem

Photo by Encyclopedia Britannica
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9UkTY8Ifdgk
Browsing by Subject?

Research Guides by Subject

- Accounting & Finance
- African-American Studies
- Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Art
- Information Systems & Supply Chain Management
- Integrated Professional Studies
- Interior Architecture
- Interlink
- International & Global Studies

Name begins with:

* I  l  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I  J  K  L  M  N  O  P  Q  R  S  T  U  V  W  All*

By Subject

Research Guides: Best resources by subject.

Top Databases

- Academic Search Complete (EBSCO)
- Business Source Complete (EBSCO)
- CINAHL Complete (EBSCO)
- Filosofer (popular magazines in original format)
- JSTOR
- Proquest Central
- PsycINFO
- PubMed
- WorldCat FirstSearch (catalog of library items worldwide)
Methodology

UNCG University Libraries: Pre-Test for Usability Study, 2018

Please fill out this questionnaire in order to participate in UNCG University Libraries usability study about websites, including the database page and research guides.

UNCG Affiliation
- Undergraduate (Freshmen, Sophomore, Junior, Senior)
- Graduate Student (including graduate students)
- Distance or Online Student (full-time)
- Transfer Student
- Other...

Academic Major or Anticipated Course of Study
Short answer text

How often do you use the Libraries' websites?
- Never
- A few times a semester
Building Tasks
Testing Subject Discovery in the A-Z List

Databases
Name begins with:

By Subject
Research Guides: Best resources by subject.

Top Databases

- Academic Search Complete (EBSCO)
- Business Source Complete (EBSCO)
- CINAHL Complete (EBSCO)
- Flipster (popular magazines in original format)
- IJTOR
- Nexis Uni
- Naxos Music Library
- Proquest Central
- Psycinfo
- Pubmed
- WorldCat FirstSearch (catalog of library items worldwide)

Many of these databases are brought to you with the support of NC LIVE, a state-wide endeavor that provides North Carolinians with access to a rich array of electronic information.
A/B/C Comparison

Databases
Live databases to find articles, proceedings, and other research material on your topic.

Select databases by name

Select databases by subject (see all)

Agriculture  Agricultural Economics
Design  Agriculture
Education  Animal Science
Engineering  Crop Science
Humanities  Entomology

A to Z Databases: Classics

Recommended Databases

Agricultural Literature Databases

Bioresource Sciences, Agriculture, and Related Fields

Databases for Veterinary Sciences

Full text access to databases is only available to registered and approved users of the website. Please contact your librarian or academic advisor for more information.
LibGuides Testing

Research Guides by Subject

- Accounting & Finance
- African-American Studies
- Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Art
- Information Systems & Supply Chain Management
- Integrated Professional Studies
- Interior Architecture
- Interlink
- International & Global Studies

Anthropology Resources: Welcome!

**Welcome!**

This guide will provide you with resources to help you find information on anthropology topics.

**Find Background Information**: good place to start brainstorming a topic.

**Books and Multimedia**: information on searching for print and/or electronic books in the library online catalog. Also links to streaming video databases to view films, documentaries, etc.

**Finding Articles**: links to some of the most important databases for finding journal articles

**Citation Styles**: link to the American Anthropological Association citation style as well as a link to examples of the other styles

Kate Hill
Recruitment

Help the Library help you!

Earn $5.00 in 10 minutes!
Conducting the Test
Demographics

![Bar chart showing the distribution of students by major: 6 students in science, 2 in arts, 1 in social sciences, and 1 in humanities.]

![Bar chart showing the distribution of students by year: 2 graduate students, 2 freshmen, 3 sophomores, 2 juniors, and 1 senior.]
General subject search
Database A-Z Subjects?

Top Databases

- Academic Search Complete (EBSCO)
- Business Source Complete (EBSCO)
- CINAHL Complete (EBSCO)
- Flipster (popular magazines in original format)
- JSTOR

By Subject

Research Guides: Best resources by subject.
What is a Database?
A/B/C Comparison winner!
Too Many Options

The databases below focus heavily on Anthropological content. Use them to find articles, book reviews, and field reports.

- AnthroSource: AS
  - Current and archival issues from over two dozen journals published by the American Anthropological Association
- SociIndex with Full Text (SIFT) (EBSCO)
  - Coverage of sociology and related disciplines including anthropology
  - Key topics: demography, ethnic & racial studies, gender studies, marriage & family, religion, social structure, socio-cultural anthropology, etc.
  - Abstracts of some core journals 1895+
- Annual Review of Anthropology
- Anthropological Index Online
  - Index to Anthropological Journals. Does not include full text.

General Databases

These databases are broader in scope than just anthropology, but are good for interdisciplinary topics especially.

- ProQuest Central
  - Searches a wide variety of ProQuest databases, including Research Library, Newsstand, Social Science Journals, and more.
- Academic Search Complete (EBSCO)
  - Includes some full text. Covers the social sciences, humanities, education, and more. Good place to start a general search.
- Project Muse
  - Full text of scholarly journals covering the humanities and social sciences. Allows you to limit searches to just journals concerned with anthropology.
- JSTOR
  - Provides full-text and images of over 1000 scholarly journals in a variety of disciplines. Note that most of its content is not recent, so if you want the most up to date research, other databases would work better.
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Contact me!

Kate Hill

kmhill6@uncg.edu