MyLibrary Focus Group (Undergraduate Students)

Participants
Ages: 21, 20, 22
Gender: 3 male
Major: Mathematics, Wood and Paper Science, Computer Science and History

Reasons you will use the Libraries’ website this semester:
  Subject 1
  • Need a book for class

  Subject 2
  • Projects require numerous books, magazines
  • Test books on reserve
  • Request unavailable books

  Subject 3
  • Writing a term paper for my history class – searching for books and articles
     • Reading an article on e-reserve
     • Requesting an interlibrary loan (rare)

Portals you find particularly useful:
  Subject 1
  • I find that cookies are threatening. Not in as much as actual harm to me or my computer, but they can often be invasive. For this reason, I do not use “personalized” websites. I would rather have a script or certificate to be accepted (as the old webmail used) than a cookie. The script is basically a cookie, but it self deletes when the explorer window is closed. Informing web users, I believe, is a safer, more secure, and comforting (to the user) way to run a website.

  Subject 2
  • My.yahoo.com, ccbonline.com, bolt.com (?)

  Subject 3
  • EBay, Amazon

Why do you like them?
  Subject 2
  • All content I want is available on one page.
  • Has a more personal feel.
  • Ease of access.
  • One bad thing – never goes into depth. If you want that you must go into site specializing in what you’re looking for.
Subject 3
- It stores all the auctions I’ve participated in. It keeps track of items that I’m interested in bidding on and just generally manages my account.
- Easy, tabbed, convenient, all in one place.
- It keeps track of the addresses I’ve sent books to, which is especially useful because I live in several places during the year and I don’t have to re-enter information. As well, it makes purchasing recommendations based on what I’ve already bought, but I also have the ability to tailor these automatic suggestions by selecting which genres, authors, etc. I’m interested in.
- Generally, I prefer to log in to personalized web pages as I do not accept cookies in my browser and I feel more secure when I log in myself. Both eBay and Amazon require the user to log in to access personalized portions of the site.

What features would you like to see in a library web portal?

Subject 1
- Obviously a way to search for books… all the basic library functions… link for ILL… I’d like to be able to search other libraries (UNC-CH, Duke)… information on requesting books that are not in the above-mentioned schools… database finder (I like the existing one)…
- A way to search within journals for a subject
- A way to search for online texts only
- Ability to bookmark frequently-used e-reserves
- A way to check what I have currently checked out and have checked out in the past (borrower history)
- Ability to track holds and requested items
- Contact information for the library system
- A help and/or FAQ section
- Information on new books of a certain genre or subject (“inform me when a new book on _____ arrives”)
- Ability to save searches

Subject 2
- Recent searches (saves searches for, say, a week)
- “Like” items (shows me like items or like subjects)
- Lets me do a specific vs. a general search
- Books broken down into majors (recommended reading for your classes, maybe professors would have to say)
- Be able to also search other schools’ databases (Duke, UNC, Wake)
- Ease of acquiring books from these schools (can do it from their sites)
- Make it simple… simple interface (streamlined)
- Easy to access all ports
- Make it look good
- Centralize it so you can access e-mail and TRACS without reentering information.
Subject 3

- I’d like to see my borrowing record displayed prominently – what’s overdue (perhaps in red), how much of a fine, what I’ve reserved, what I have checked out… Notify you when book’s status changes (“send me an e-mail when this book is shelved/returned”).
- It’d be nice if I could create a link to a particular e-reserve site instead of searching for the teacher’s name each time… Integrate with TRACS so it knows what you’ve signed up for and create links to forums and e-reserves for that class (if one section, take me right to the list of articles).
- I’d like a list of databases (where I’d select which ones I want on the list) that I use frequently.
- I’d like to be able to save and restore research sessions: topics I looked at, authors, records I examined.
- It would be cool if an instructor could add information or notes as well. The instructor could send a link to MyLibrary and then MyLibrary could put that link on every person’s page who is in that class. Ideally, this would be in a separate section in case the instructor began spamming people with too many messages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Would not use</th>
<th>Don’t understand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Account</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search preferences</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search strategies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custom MultiSearch</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marked list</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citation format</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alerts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal list</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publish personal list</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Anything else?
Subject 3

- Liked Subject 2’s idea of jumping from the library website to webmail… shouldn’t be too hard… would be really neat… WRAP just uses session cookies.
- Might be nice to have links from call numbers searched to maps showing where located in physical library.

Subject 2

- Map idea is nice.
Subject 1
- I don’t understand what’s so hard with “5th Floor”.

Subject 3
- Hard to find book once you get to the right floor.

Subject 1
- Stacks are shifted too often for this to be practical.

Subject 2
- Could at least put the general area of floor.

Subject 3
- Maybe quadrants, e.g., “main tower toward the front”.

Subject 2
- Make it easy.