
SFX Usability Testing at ASU

Introduction

ASU Libraries implemented open linking technology in the Fall semester of 2005, with the debut of SFX (locally named “Get It!@ASU”) from ExLibris.

At the time of implementation, the user interface customizations that were made were based only on staff feedback, since there was insufficient time for user testing prior to the rollout. In the Fall of 2006, we reevaluated the SFX to enhance the user interface.

Usability Testing

The SFX User Interface group decided to conduct both usability tests and focus groups to obtain user feedback for the project. Usability tests would provide a way to directly observe the behaviors of our users. Focus groups would allow library staff to identify problems with the current interface and provide suggestions for improvements.

Fourteen usability tests and three focus groups were conducted. One focus group was conducted at each of the three campuses (Tempe, West, and Polytechnic). We decided to test the following user groups:

- Undergraduate Students
- Graduate Students
- Faculty

Four to five users from each user group were tested. We also made every attempt to test at least one user from each of the three ASU campuses. Since research shows that most problems with usability design are identified by testing as few as five users (Nielsen, 1993), we felt that the tests we conducted would cover the diversity of behavior within the group.

Pre-test questionnaires were given. Each user was then taken through five activities and asked to answer two questions in regards to locating journal articles. In order to narrow the focus of our tests to the “Get It!@ASU” menu, we used the same source for each activity (Academic Search Premier). The searches were conducted beforehand and the users were asked to obtain the full text of the article. The targets for full text varied in each activity:

- Activity 1: Article is available electronically full text from Academic Search Premier.
- Activity 2: Article is available full text through another provider.
- Activity 3: Available in several online databases.
- Activity 4: Only available in print through the ASU catalog.
- Activity 5: Only available through Interlibrary Loan.

Morae Usability Software was used to record the usability tests.

Summary of Recommendations

Based on the results from the usability tests, the team recommended that ASU Libraries:

1. Add a “More Options” tab.
2. Remove Refworks link (which did not work well).
3. Use different language “We have: A Copy in Print.”
4. Create a box around the citation for emphasis.
5. Rank databases/ejournal packages based on best “bets” for ease of finding resources. Lexis-Nexis, for example, is tricky because you have to search again for the item, so we weighted it lower on the results screen.
6. Change “Go” button color to green instead of red.
7. Make target title hyperlink as well as button.
8. Take out links to other libraries at top of menu.
9. Move Ask a Librarian link and add a link to a new “Get It!” tutorial.
10. Add document delivery option for Polytechnic students.
11. Ensure that the window for the latest target opens up on top of all other windows.
12. Recommend to Google Scholar that they use our button rather than just a text link.
13. Add link to citation linker to library home page under “Find.”
14. Include a link back to “Find e-Journal.”

Post Testing

After the changes were implemented, we conducted another round of user testing. The data from these tests is currently being analyzed, but it was fairly evident from observing the tests, that there was a marked improvement in interface usability.

Old Screen – Available in Full Text from More than One Target:

The screenshot shows a web interface for ASU libraries. At the top, there is a red header with the 'Get It! ASU' logo and the text 'Services for this item'. Below the header, there are navigation links for 'ASU Libraries: Architecture | Hayden | Law | Music | Polytechnic | Science | West' and a link for 'Need Help? Ask a Librarian'. The main content area displays the following information:

- Author:** Adesnik
- Title:** Engaging Autocratic Allies to Promote Democracy.
- Source:** The Washington quarterly [0163-660X] yr:2006 vol:29 iss:2 pg:7

Below this information, there is a section titled 'Available Online:' with several options, each with a 'GO' button:

- From **EBSCOhost Electronic Journals Service**: Year: 2006, Volume: 29, Issue: 2, Start Page: 7
- From **LexisNexis Academic**: *Must search for article in database.*
- From **Project Muse Standard Collection**: Year: 2006, Volume: 29, Issue: 2, Start Page: 7
- From **Wilson Social Sciences Index**: Year: 2006, Volume: 29, Issue: 2, Start Page: 7

There is also a section for 'Availability in Paper or Microfilm:' with a link to 'Check the ASU Libraries Online Catalog' and a 'GO' button.

Below this, there is a section titled 'More Services for this item' with the following options:

- Save this Citation**: Download partial citation into your **RefWorks Account** (GO); Create a stable URL and format the **citation** (GO)
- About This Journal:** To determine if the journal is refereed, see **ulrichsweb.com** (GO). *Sometimes "refereed" is called "scholarly" or "peer-reviewed."*
- Need Help?** For more information, read the **Get It! FAQ** (GO); Questions? **Ask a Librarian** (GO)

The bottom of the screenshot shows a browser status bar with 'Done' and 'Internet' icons.

New Screen – Available in Full Text from More than One Target:

Author: Adesnik
Title: Engaging Autocratic Allies to Promote Democracy.
Source: The Washington quarterly [0163-660X] yr:2006 vol:29 iss:2 pg:7

Available Online:

► From [Project Muse Standard Collection](#)

Year: Volume: Issue: Start Page:

► From [Wilson Social Sciences Index](#)

Year: Volume: Issue: Start Page:

► From [EBSCOhost Electronic Journals Service](#)

Year: Volume: Issue: Start Page:

► From [LexisNexis Academic](#)

Must search for article in database.

Paper or Microform:

► **This item not found in the ASU Libraries Catalog**

[More Options](#)

[Document Delivery for Polytechnic Students](#)

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References

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Marc, Silver. "Exploring Interface Design." *Library Media Connection* 23.6 (2005): 75-.

Nielsen, Jakob, and Landauer, Thomas K.: "A Mathematical Model of the Finding of Usability Problems," *Proceedings of ACM INTERCHI'93 Conference (Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 24-29 April 1993)*: 206-213.

Roberts, Gary. "Include Your Patrons in Web Design." *Computers in Libraries* 25.9 (2005): 30-3.

Robertson, Wendy C., and Paul A. Soderdahl. "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About SFX but Were Afraid to Ask." *Serials Librarian* 47.1/2 (2004): 129-38.

Wakimoto, Jina Choi, David S. Walker, and Katherine S. Dabbour. "The Myths and Realities of SFX in Academic Libraries." *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 32.2 (2006): 127-36.

SFX Usability Studies Online

California Digital Library Usability Testing

http://www.cdlib.org/inside/assess/evaluation_activities/index.html

USMAI Consortium of Libraries Usability Testing

<http://usmai.umd.edu/userinter/usability.html>

MIT Libraries Big Test

<http://macfadden.mit.edu:9500/webgroup/usability2002/big-test/index.html>

What we have learned in two years: SFX at Illinois State University's Miner Library

<http://www.carli.illinois.edu/reports/iuag/060224SFXatISUfinal.ppt>

UC-eLinks Usability Testing, October 2003

https://wiki.asu.edu/sfx/images/d/df/Ucelinks_usability_final_report.pdf