BUDGET USABILITY without a USABILITY BUDGET

2010 Library Website Task Force

Usability Task Force (UTF)

- November 2009 – April 2010
- 3 methods used for 4 different evaluations
- Approximately 200 total testing participants
- Open staff session held at the beginning of the project to solicit feedback

Usability Core Group

- 2-year-term
- 1 chair
- 4 core members

Usability Task Force (UTF)

- Short-term (4-6 months)
- 2 core members + 3-4 members

Standard Methods

- Comparative Advantage
- Heuristic Evaluation
- Card Sorting
- Guerrilla Testing
- Paper Prototyping
- Participatory Design
- Formal User Tests
- Surveys
- Individual Interviews
- Focus Groups

Budget

Usability doesn’t have to be complicated and time-consuming. We favor more straightforward, “budget” techniques as a means to the most interesting and useful results.

- $0
- $1-$25
- $25+

Card Sorting

Organization of Services/Departments/Libraries

The goal for these tests was to recategorize content on the web site currently grouped under Services, Departments and Libraries.

Group Paper Card Sort for Students

- 18 participants: undergrads, grad students (divided into 4 groups)
- Organized 84 cards representing half of this content
- This method allowed us to see interaction among students, hear thought processes, and better understand confusing labels

Individual Online Card Sort for Library Staff

- 140 staff completed exercise
- Provided more data, but didn’t exposure the thought process

Guerrilla Testing

Quick Links and Search & Browse Results

The goals were to determine a) the order of the headings on the search results and the browse results pages, and b) to fine-tune the contents & labels for the Quick Links section.

We call this “guerrilla testing” because we hope to get quick and short answers to quick short questions. Five minutes is our goal!

Quick Links

- 20 participants: undergrads, grad students
- Shown the current Quick Links section without its title—asked to name the section and describe where each link went
- Then asked what links they would most like to see in a grouping of links like this one

Search & Browse Results

- 12 participants
- Asked to search or browse on a topic of interest to them
- Then asked to view results, reorder the headings, and suggest alternative headings

Participatory Design

Library Gateway

The goal for this exercise was to gain a better understanding of which tools and sections of the Library website’s home page the participants found most and least useful.

- 37 participants: undergrads, grad students, faculty and Library staff
- Asked to circle the things they find useful, make an "X" through the things they don’t find useful, and add a note for anything they think is missing