Web Usability
About Web Assessment

Duke University Libraries' Web Interfaces Group (WIG) sponsors regular assessment activities of the Libraries' homepage and supporting pages. This assessment includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Public reporting of web statistics via Google Analytics each semester and at the end of the second summer session.
2. User studies in the form of usability studies, circle-mapping, or user interviews of the homepage annually: conducted at the end of the spring semester; analysis and reporting early summer; and changes implemented by start of classes fall semester.
3. User studies in the form of usability studies, user interviews, or focus groups will be conducted on major web interfaces like the Search Resources collective and individual components every year, mid year: analysis and reporting and changes implemented by start of classes fall semester.
4. Content authors will be expected to assess their websites and pages, independently.

The WIG will publish findings and relevant statistics.

Staff from the Libraries' Digital Experience Services department provide assessment-related training and support on the use of Google Analytics and the Libraries' Usability Lab.
Heatmaps of Key Library Pages: Spring 2011

What is this? This page presents heatmaps showing usage trends on several library web pages during spring 2011.

What is a heatmap? Heatmaps are a graphical representation of where patrons clicked when visiting a web page. Cool colors mean fewer clicks, and warm colors mean more clicks.

How did we make heatmaps? We followed steps outlined in the blog post "The definitive heatmap" to create our heatmaps. This method uses Javascript, Ruby and RMagick.

Library Homepage: March 21–25

Sample of 40,000 clicks made during the week of March 21, 2011

Interlibrary Loan page: March 28–30

Sample of 500 clicks during week of March 28, 2011

Special Collections Homepage: April 4–8

Sample of 800 clicks during week of April 4, 2011

Data & GIS Homepage: April 11–15

Sample of 500 clicks during week of April 11, 2011
User Interface Group

The User Interface Group is a subset of the User Experience Group and serves as the decision-making team for design of the Libraries' public user interfaces. For details, see our charge.

The UIG wiki contains the most up-to-date information about UIG and its activities.

Members

- Darcy Duke, Chair
- Melissa Feiden
- Remlee Green
- Georgiana MacReynolds
User Interface Group

Criteria for prioritizing our work

This list is used for prioritizing the normal, everyday requests and ideas that come our way. It’s not for the big projects (i.e., Project SimplE) that cost extra money and staff time, but just for the everyday work.

User impact

- solves a problem
- affects a large number of users
- things that show we’re on the cutting edge
- things that are fun (for us and for users)
- things that have been requested by multiple users (not just one)

Sub-categories of user impact:

- improves known item searching
- improves topical discovery
- improves connections with other systems and tools
- help with evaluating best sources of info
- helps users save time
- helps with personal information management (saving, sorting, sharing, citing what they found)

Staffing

- doesn’t take a huge amount of staff time to implement
- things that are easy and we know how to do or could easily find out how to do
- things that we could delegate to students or interns or temp help
- things that don’t cost extra money to implement
- improves staff workflow and saves time
- solves more than one problem with one solution
Usability in the Library

About this Site
This website is sponsored by the University of Michigan University Library's Usability Group which is a sub-committee of PARC (Public Access Resource Committee) and ERSC (Electronic Resources Steering Committee). The usability studies represented here have been conducted by various groups throughout the UM Libraries as well as by the Usability Group and its predecessor the Usability Working Group. Only a select group of reports are included here, and more will be added as they are completed.

The goal of this website is to provide open access to our reports and working documents in order to share our findings with the University of Michigan libraries as well as the community-at-large. We hope that sharing our findings will benefit and inform others in their research.

Usability Group Mission Statement
The Usability Group guides and implements usability testing of the Library's web resources and services through short-term task forces comprised of Usability Group members, project stakeholders, and additional volunteers. This includes the Library's locally generated web pages and DLPS (Digital Library Production Service) resources, as well as customizable vendor supported resources, such as MetaLib (SearchTools), Aleph (Mirlyn) and SFX. This group works with PARC and ERSC to set priorities for usability testing shared Library web sites and services, with a focus on testing interfaces and concepts that are broadly implemented across the Library's web environment.

About the Members
Current Members
- Suzanne Chapman (committee chair) - Interface & User Testing Specialist, Digital Library Production Service
- Shevon Desai - Social Science/Humanities Librarian, Reference Department Hatcher Graduate Library
- Kat Hagedorn - Digital Library Projects Manager, Digital Library Production Service
- Julie Piacentine - Public Services Librarian, Reference Department Hatcher Graduate Library
- Ken Varnum - Web Systems Manager, Library Information Technology

Past Members
- David Carter - EECS Librarian; Web & Reference Services Coordinator, Art Architecture & Engineering Library
- Mike Creech - Web Content Manager, MLibrary
- Karen Downing - Foundation & Grants Librarian, Reference Department Hatcher
Graduate Library
- Kat Hagedorn (past committee chair) - Metadata Harvesting Librarian, Digital Library Production Service
- Suzanne Gray - Library Web Services Manager
- Anne Karle-Zenith - Special Projects Librarian, University Library IT & Technical Services
- Shana Kimball - Electronic Projects Editor, Scholarly Publishing Office
- Molly Kleinman - Associate Intellectual Property Specialist and Special Projects Librarian
- Jennifer Nardine - Public Services Librarian, Shapiro Undergraduate Library
- Gurpreet K. Rana - Clinical Education Librarian, Taubman Health Sciences Library
- Bob Tolliver - Engineering Librarian, Art Architecture & Engineering Library

Past Interns
- Jacob Solomon - School of Information (Spring/Summer 2008)
- Matt Schulz - School of Information (Spring/Summer 2008)
- Pratibha Bhaskaran - School of Information (Winter 2008)
- Krystle Williams - School of Information (Winter 2008)
- Julie Piacentine - School of Information (Fall 2007)
- John Suciu - School of Information (Fall 2007)
- Xiaomin Jiang - School of Information (Spring/Summer 2007)
- Josh Morse - School of Information (Spring/Summer 2007)
- Natasha Santi - School of Information (Winter 2007)
- Cora Bledsoe - School of Information (Fall 2006)
- Tonya Mccarthy - School of Information (Fall 2006)
- Cathly Lu - Web Developer & Analyst, Library Web Services (Spring 2005)
- Kavitha Reddy - School of Information (Spring 2005)

Student Internships
The Usability Working Group sometimes employs student interns from the University of Michigan School of Information. If you are interested in working with us, please contact us for more information.
Usability in the Library: Mirlyn (VuFind) Reports

About the Project

VuFind is the open-source “next generation” system that has been adapted for use as our new public discovery tool.

Mirlyn “Available Online” Label Guerilla Test (February 2011)

The goal of this guerilla test was to determine which of four labels (three alternate labels, in addition to the current “available online” label) denoting online availability is preferred by patrons, taking time to ensure that patrons understand the range of situations currently represented by the “available online” label. We also solicited suggestions for alternate labels from participants.

Mirlyn Search Satisfaction Survey (February 2011)

The primary purpose of this survey was to gather information about how satisfied patrons are with search results in Mirlyn and whether satisfaction levels vary significantly between categories of users (i.e. undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, etc.). The survey was designed to measure satisfaction with searching overall and with two different kinds of searches: known item searches for specific items a patron already knows about and subject searches for items about a particular topic or subject.

VuFind Modified Card Sorting Labels Test (December 2008)

The goals for this test were to solicit suggestions from users for labeling facet categories, determine how users perceive the relative importance of facets, and determine how many narrowing terms users would like to see within each facet.

VuFind Look-n-Feel Guerilla Test (November 2008)

The goal for this test was to evaluate how users perceive the catalog when it is and is not embedded into a page with navigation tool bars located at the top of the library’s homepage.

VuFind Login Guerilla Test (November 2008)

The goal for this test was to determine how users perceive login when using the catalog, and at which access points it is best to force a login decision.