Information Literacy/Information Architecture: Lessons Learned From a Card Sort Exercise

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Georgia Regents University
Augusta State and Georgia Health Sciences (MCG) Universities announce plan to consolidate
Consolidation Moves Forward

**JANUARY 12, 2012**
University System of Georgia (USG) Board of Regents approve merger of Augusta State and Georgia Health Sciences University.

**December 11, 2012**
SACS approves consolidation.

**Fall 2013**
Inaugural class of GRU enrolled.

**Summer-Fall 2012**
Library Work Team submit regular updates to University Consolidation Working Group. Updates are made available to public.

**January 8, 2013**
Consolidation takes effect after approval from USG Board of Regents.
Consolidation of Libraries

- **Greenblatt Library**: Graduates and Clinicians
  - Health and science
  - Research-focused

- **Reese Library**: Undergraduates
  - Liberal-arts
  - Teaching-focused

University Libraries
Consolidated Libraries
Sub-Committee Formed

“to consolidate the Reese and Greenblatt Libraries websites into one Libraries website to best meet the needs of the students, faculty, clinicians, researchers and staff of New U by mid-January 2013 when SACS approves consolidation”
Consolidated Libraries Sub-Committee Formed

- Librarian
  Library Systems
  Greenblatt Library

- Librarian
  Research and Education
  Greenblatt Library

- Staff / Librarian
  Research and Education
  Greenblatt Library

- Librarian
  Reference and Education
  Reese Library

- Staff
  Library Systems
  Reese Library

- Librarian
  Reference and Education
  Reese Library
Early Research and Review
Early Research and Review


Early Research and Review
Early Research and Review
Gaining User Perspective: Survey

“It is too complicated navigating through, it should be more like common sense”

“lack of visual appeal”

“too many links”

“cluttered”

“(needs) better link to news and events”
Gaining User Perspective: Survey

ASU users indicated that GALILEO, GIL-Find, and eJournals were the most important.

v.s.

GHSU users indicate eJournals list and Database list most important.
Early Research and Review
Gaining User Perspective: Next Steps

• Sub-Committee formed
• Committee review of professional literature and aspirational sites
• Committee review of existing websites
• Gather user perspective
• Horizontal navigation bar solution
• Card-sort exercise
The Card Sort
Overview

Type of Card Sort

• Closed Cart Sort

Materials

• Script
• Index Cards
• Sign in Sheet
• Incentives
• Camera
• Notepad

Setting

• Reese
  – Study Rooms

• Greenblatt
  – Lobby of the Health Sciences Building
  – Library Study Room
Thank you for agreeing to participate. Please sign in.

I will now read aloud a series of instructions:

Welcome! Greenblatt Library is in the process of redesigning the library website so that it is more useful to patrons. Today we will be conducting a card-sorting exercise in order to gain some understanding of how users would organize information.

Your task will be to sort a variety of library resources and services into predetermined categories.

Resources and services will be written on small, white cards. *Hold up white cards*

Categories will be written on the larger, yellow cards. *Point towards yellow cards that are taped to table.*

We ask that you take each of the white cards and place them into groups representing categories of information that make sense to you. Take your time and analyze the term that appears on each white card. Sort the white card into one of the 6 categories by laying the white card below the corresponding category.

- **Vegetables**
  - Broccoli
  - Celery
  - Lettuce
  - Carrots

- **Fruits**
  - Apple
  - Orange

- **Dairy**
  - Cheese
  - Yogurt
Categories

Resources & Services (Terms)

- FIND INFORMATION
- ABOUT
- HELP
- SERVICES
- LIBRARIES & COLLECTIONS
- ASK A LIBRARIAN

- Events Calendar
- Email
- Policies
- Borrowing/Circulation
- Government Documents
- Liaison/Subject Librarians
- Elonmail
How did we find participants?

- Flyers
- Snacks
- Walk-ins
- Liaisons/embedded librarians
Results: Participants

- Faculty: 3
- Staff: 2
- Students: 17

Greenl batt Library  Reese Library
# Results: Compiling Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HELP</th>
<th>ABOUT</th>
<th>FIND INFORMATION</th>
<th>SERVICES</th>
<th>LIBRARIES &amp; COLLECTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOW TO...</td>
<td>ORGANIZATIONAL CHART</td>
<td>CATALOG</td>
<td>COMMUNITY SERVICES</td>
<td>REESE LIBRARY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIBANSWERS/FAQS</td>
<td>DIRECTIONS/FLOOR PLAN</td>
<td>DATABASES A-Z</td>
<td>FACULTY SERVICES</td>
<td>SPECIAL COLLECTIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TUTORIALS</td>
<td>PHONE</td>
<td>GIL EXPRESS</td>
<td>BORROWING/CIRCULATION</td>
<td>CURRICULUM CENTER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASK A LIBRARIAN</td>
<td>EMAIL</td>
<td>GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS</td>
<td>DOCUMENT DELIVERY/ILL</td>
<td>EJOURNALS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAT</td>
<td>STAFF DIRECTORY/DEPARTMENT LIST</td>
<td>LIBGUIDES</td>
<td>AUDIO/VISUAL</td>
<td>EBOOKS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEXT/SMS</td>
<td>POLICIES</td>
<td>RESEARCH CONSULTATION</td>
<td>SCHEDULE A ROOM</td>
<td>HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS/ARCHIVES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EVENTS CALENDAR</td>
<td></td>
<td>OFF CAMPUS ACCESS</td>
<td>GREENBLATT LIBRARIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SUPPORT THE LIBRARIES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>STRATEGIC PLAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Terms which needed clarification
- LIAISONS/SUBJECT LIBRARIANS
- SMS
- STRATEGIC PLAN and ORGANIZATIONAL CHART not specific enough – thought org chart was about floor plans.

### User Remarks
- I would move text/sms to “Help” and combine it with chat, making it one card instead of two.
- I have absolutely no idea what to do with liaisons/subject librarians.
- I would not have both “Help” and “Ask a Librarian” – Instead use “Help” then have subgroups, such as “Ask a Librarian” then chat, etc. under that. To me ask a librarian means that you have questions about the library.
- Change “find information” to “research” or “research online.”

### Tester Remarks
- Near the end subject moved items to “Find Information,” which seemed to be the most confusing header.
- Would ORDER BY IMPORTANCE.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Find Resources</th>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Get Help</th>
<th>Libraries &amp; Collections</th>
<th>About Us</th>
<th>Contact Us</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catalog</td>
<td>Borrowing &amp; Renewal</td>
<td>LibAnswers</td>
<td>Curriculum Center</td>
<td>Floor Plans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eBooks</td>
<td>For Community Patrons</td>
<td>LibGuides</td>
<td>Government Information</td>
<td>Give to the Libraries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eJournals</td>
<td>For Faculty</td>
<td>Off-Campus Access</td>
<td>Greenblatt Library</td>
<td>Maps &amp; Directions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GALILEO</td>
<td>For Patrons with Disabilities</td>
<td>Research Consultation</td>
<td>Historical Collections &amp; Archives</td>
<td>Organizational Chart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Sciences Databases</td>
<td>GIL Express</td>
<td>Tutorials</td>
<td>Reese Library</td>
<td>Policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interlibrary Loan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Special Collections</td>
<td>Staff Directory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic Plan</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Lessons Learned

“There are often unforeseen results, though, depending on the perceptions and experience of the users” (Brucker, 2010, p. 42)
LESSON #1

archives citation bibliography boolean operators catalog circulation interlibrary loan database liaison subject specialist government documents course reserves reference edition ezproxy endnote ejournals microforms primary source organizational chart strategic plan GALILEO GIL universal catalog borrowing renewing my library account institutional repository research consultation repository curriculum materials special collections learning center citation style guides data services patrons users discharged call number stacks OPAC digital information literacy embedded librarian resources collections users library instruction scholarly commons LibGuides scholarly voyager serials bound volumes document delivery content management index patrons OCLC worldcat

Library Jargon
“Some of these cards, when taken out of the context of the Web site, may convey little meaning to users” (Brucker, 2010, p. 43).
LESSON #2

CREATING CONTEXT
Closed card sort: “...there is a real danger of skewing the results, guiding users into categories that might not actually make any sense to them, or categories they never would have created on their own” (Brucker, 2010, p. 43).
“A closed card sort can be helpful in determining where someone would place an item, but that doesn’t mean that it illustrates which categories users will look at in order to find information on an actual Web site” (Brucker, 2010, pp. 47-48).
LESSON #3

INTERPRETING THE DATA
• Qualitative versus quantitative.
• Observational data (take good notes).
• Keep track of terms that confuse users.
• Follow up questions and discussion.
• Different users have different needs (faculty/student/staff).
• Choose your software before you plan and perform the sort.
• “Dedicated statistical software could be used to uncover patterns in the data” (Brucker, 2010, p. 49).

  o Statistical cluster analysis (XLSTAT)
  o [http://www.bannersandarrows.com/files/banda/card_sorting_a_definitive_guide/Card_Sort_Analysis_Tmpl.xls](http://www.bannersandarrows.com/files/banda/card_sorting_a_definitive_guide/Card_Sort_Analysis_Tmpl.xls) (enhances observational data; does not provide robust statistical data)
No matter how much you plan, there will be unforeseen results.
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<td>A-Z Index</td>
<td>Greenblatt Library (Health Sciences)</td>
<td>Floor Plans</td>
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<td>Reese Library (Summerville)</td>
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Rewind

Photo credit: Charles Grier
What we Would do Different

• Practice. Practice. Practice.
• Have a plan for analyzing data.
• Tell participants to go with first reaction and don’t overthink.
• Don’t provide category headings (ask participants to suggest heading names).
• Let them duplicate terms in different categories.
• Have definitions ready for each term (put on back of index card using natural language).
“...observational data that might be more useful than any statistical results” (Brucker, 2010, p. 51).
Navigational Bar in Context
References


