

Thesis Presentation:

A Rubric to Assess the
Virtual Library

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Introduction

- The library is often considered the heart of a college/university campus, offering collections, research support, instruction, and a space to study and work.
- Library websites have evolved over the last 20-30 years from static pages largely used to convey operational information to interactive and engaging spaces.
 - This evolution supports the academic and research needs of users who are not on campus but also the trend of users increasingly seeking online resources and interactions.
- Through library websites, libraries try to provide a similar experience to users as they would have in the physical library. This includes access to sufficient resources and research assistance as well as instruction and workshops.
 - The American Library Association Code of Ethics calls for equitable access for all users (*Code of Ethics of the American Library Association*, 2008).

Research question



- How can academic libraries assess their virtual libraries for engagement and dynamic content?
 - What components make up an interactive website?
 - How are these components represented in academic library virtual spaces?

Literature review

- ▮ Library websites began as communication and marketing tools; they now should be learning spaces that foster research, exploration, and community.
- ▮ Human- Centered Design (HCD) and Library 2.0 describe the characteristics that can be found in dynamic and interactive virtual libraries.
- ▮ Users emphasize interpersonal communication and services as being important in the research process. Libraries are trying to fill that need.
- ▮ Research shows that users want
 - ▮ Simple, consistent, and personalized online services;
 - ▮ Full access to resources;
 - ▮ Remote access to library services (Mierzecka et al., 2017)

Theories

Human-Centered Design (HCD)

- ▮ “a powerful alternative philosophy for systems design and broader educational and societal development” (Cooley, 1999, p. 64)
- ▮ Characteristics include:
 - ▮ Coherence
 - ▮ Inclusiveness
 - ▮ Malleability
 - ▮ Engagement
 - ▮ Ownership
 - ▮ Responsiveness
 - ▮ Purpose
 - ▮ Panoramic
 - ▮ Transcendence

Library 2.0

- ▮ “the application of interactive, collaborative, and multi-media web-based technologies to web-based library services and collections” (Maness, 2006)
- ▮ Essential elements
 - ▮ User-centered
 - ▮ Includes multi-media
 - ▮ Socially rich
 - ▮ Communally innovative

The Virtual Library

- ▮ The virtual library is a “user-centered virtual community” (Maness, 2006) providing access to resources and research assistance as well as creating a community feel that users have come to expect in their library.

Project Description

- ▮ Rubric combined characteristics from Human-Centered Design with the ones from Library 2.0
- ▮ The homepages of 3 academic libraries were assessed using the rubric.
 - ▮ Libraries are:
 - ▮ members of the Association of Research Libraries
 - ▮ R1 institutions (high level of research)
- ▮ Included the COVID-19 update pages for each library.
- ▮ Libraries are:
 - ▮ Boston College Library (BC)
 - ▮ University of Notre Dame's Hesburgh Library (ND)
 - ▮ University of California – Los Angeles Library (UCLA)

Rubric

Characteristic (Theory)	Definition	Examples
User-centered (Library 2.0)	User can participate in the site; content is dynamic	
Coherence (HCD)	User is aware of the possibilities on the site	Clear navigation menu; user-friendly language
Malleability (HCD)	Site's ability to conform to user's needs	Ability to personalize catalog or homepage; mobile-friendly site
Purpose (HCD)	Site responds to users' needs and encourages further exploration	Access to research; connect with librarian; FAQs
Multi-media (Library 2.0)	Dynamic content to enrich experience	
Audio/Video	Site contains audio and video content	Screencasts, video tutorials
Socially rich (Library 2.0)	Site allows for communication and interaction	
Engagement (HCD)	Encourages user participation	Online chat; online classes; feedback forms
Responsiveness (HCD)	Site responds to individual requirements and needs	Accessibility features; mobile-friendly; information is discoverable
Communally innovative (Library 2.0)	Site is adaptive to changing needs, expectations, and demographics	
Inclusive (HCD)	User is made to feel part of a community	Chat with librarians, submit resource recommendations
Ownership (HCD)	User feels they can create content and have ownership over parts of the system	Personalize pages; add tags/metadata
Panoramic (HCD)	User can attain boundary knowledge and is able to use site effectively and competently	User locates information needed as well as additional sources
Transcendence (HCD)	Browsability of the site; user finds needed information and explores further	Catalog encourages browsing; additional source recommendations

Rubric

Table 2. – Rubric used to evaluate library homepage

Library:			
Characteristic (Theory)	Definition	Evidence on site	Score
User-centered (Library 2.0)	User can participate in the site; content is dynamic		X out of 3
Coherence (HCD)	User is aware of the possibilities on the site		
Malleability (HCD)	Site's ability to conform to user's needs		
Purpose (HCD)	Site responds to users' needs and encourages further exploration		
Multi-media (Library 2.0)	Dynamic content to enrich experience		X out of 1
Audio/Video	Site contains audio and video content		
Socially rich (Library 2.0)	Site allows for communication and interaction		X out of 2
Engagement (HCD)	Encourages user participation		
Responsiveness (HCD)	Site responds to individual requirements and needs		
Communally innovative (Library 2.0)	Site is adaptive to changing needs, expectations, and demographics		X out of 4
Inclusive (HCD)	User is made to feel part of a community		
Ownership (HCD)	User feels they can create content and have ownership over parts of the system		
Panoramic (HCD)	User can attain boundary knowledge and is able to use site effectively and competently		
Transcendence (HCD)	Browsability of the site; user finds needed information and explores further		
		Total	X out of 10

Results

	Libraries		
Characteristic (Theory)	BC	ND	UCLA
User-centered (Library 2.0)	2.75	3	2.5
Coherence (HCD)	1	1	1
Malleability (HCD)	.75	1	.75
Purpose (HCD)	1	1	.75
Multi-media (Library 2.0)	.75	0	1
Audio/Video	.75	0	1
Socially rich (Library 2.0)	2	2	1.75
Engagement (HCD)	1	1	1
Responsiveness (HCD)	1	1	.75
Communally innovative (Library 2.0)	3.5	4	3
Inclusive (HCD)	1	1	.5
Ownership (HCD)	.5	1	1
Panoramic (HCD)	1	1	1
Transcendence (HCD)	1	1	.5
Total	9	9	8.25

Example

UNIVERSITY *of* NOTRE DAME

OFFICE *of the* PROVOST

HESBURGH LIBRARIES

[Hesburgh Libraries COVID-19 Service Continuity](#) | For University-wide updates, visit coronavirus.nd.edu

HOME RESEARCH SERVICES LIBRARIES ABOUT

Q ▲ LOG IN HOURS ⌚

OneSearch ▼ SEARCH

[SAVE](#) OneSearch as my default search. [Advanced Search](#)

Chat with us

Example

Research Guides

Course Guides

Ask A Librarian



Chat with us

Ask a question 24/7

[Chat now >](#)



Email us

Send us a question

[Email us >](#)



Meet with us

Request an online appointment with a subject librarian.

[Meet with a librarian >](#)

- [Chat, email](#) or schedule an [online appointment](#)

Circulation, ILL & Reserves

- [Renew or return library materials](#) while the Libraries are closed
- [Interlibrary Loan & book chapter request](#)
- Request [digitization of physical items](#) for [Course Reserves](#)

Additional Resources

- List of [Enhanced Access sites](#) during COVID-19
- [Connecting from off-campus](#)
- Search our [FAQ](#) answers or check out our [How To's](#)

Read more about all the online services we provide on our [BC Libraries Services Update](#) page.



Bibliosaurusspyingthe Answer Wall



Jack's at home in his sunny office



Sarah and company working from home

See more [behinds the scenes images](#) from the library staff!

Chat With Us

Conclusion

- ▮ Overall, the 3 libraries scored high using this rubric. The sites were lacking in different areas.
 - ▮ These results were expected because the sites are all from R1 institutions that are members of the Association of Research Libraries.
 - ▮ Further assessment may include libraries from R2 & R3 institutions.
- ▮ Only ND site allowed users to personalize their library experience directly from the homepage.
- ▮ Rubric needs to be refined to accommodate different levels of meeting the criteria.

References

Code of Ethics of the American Library Association. (2008). American Library Association. Retrieved 5/3/2020 from <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/proethics/codeofethics/Code%20of%20Ethics%20of%20the%20American%20Library%20Association.pdf>

Cooley, M. (1999). Human-Centered Design. In R. Jacobson (Ed.), *Information Design* (pp. 59-81). MIT Press.

Images from Pixabay

Maness, J. M. (2006). Library 2.0 Theory: Web 2.0 and its implications for libraries. *Webology*, 3(2). <http://www.webology.org/2006/v3n2/a25.html>

Mierzecka, A., Kisilowska, M., & Suminas, A. (2017). Researchers' Expectations Regarding the Online Presence of Academic Libraries [Article]. *College & Research Libraries*, 78(7), 934-951. <https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.78.7.934>