Conducting an Informal Website Usability Study

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Today’s Agenda

- Why
- What
- Who
- How
- Huh?
About Our Library

Atlanta University Center
Robert W. Woodruff Library
About Our Library

Atlanta University Center
Robert W. Woodruff Library

Clark Atlanta University

March 2012

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Spelman College

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LOTS OF USER GROUPS.

LOTS OF NEEDS.
Usability Plans

- User Observation
- Card Sorting
Usability Plans Not so fast

• User Observation

Card Sorting
Institutional Review Board

Stay back!
Overcoming Challenges

Library folk who need to get student feedback

Institutional Review Board
We went guerilla.*

*Yes, I know the difference between “guerilla” and “gorilla.” This just happens to be an awesome image.
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Key Concepts
- Participants chosen at random
- Anonymity
- Unstructured★★★
- One-word answers = OK
Informal Usability Study

**WHAT WE USED**

- Questionnaire
  - General impressions
- Chart
  - Global navigation
- Gutsy staff
Informal Usability Study

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

- Used to get general opinions of current website

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**Web Site Redesign Usability Study: Informal survey**

*Pre-test:*
Have you used the AUC website? Tell us about your experience if you have.

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**Tasks:**
We can choose three questions:

1. Could you find the opening and closing hours at the library?
2. Could you find the book “The Tipping Point” by Malcolm Gladwell?
3. You’ve been told to find scholarly articles for an assignment. Where would you find them?
4. You’re writing a paper and need citations in the correct formats. Can you locate a tool on the website that can help you?
5. Can you locate contact information for the Archives Research Center?
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Questionnaire: Themes

- “liven it up with graphics and color”
- “less links and menus”
- “easy to find contact info”
- “I don’t know where to go to find things”
- “looks boring – liven it up”
- “library map and pictures”
- “make it simpler”
- “too many options – simplify”
# Informal Usability Study

## Chart

- Used in deciding global navigation structure
Ranking Chart: Results

• What We Did
  1. How Do I?
  2. Learning Resources
  3. Just for You
  4. Services
  5. News, Events & Exhibits
  6. About Us

• What They Said
  1. How Do I?
  2. Learning Resources
  3. Services
  4. Just for You
  5. News, Events & Exhibits
  6. About Us

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Advantages

• Low Cost
• Easy
• Fast results
• Quick implementation
• Quick turnaround
Disadvantages

• Relies on self-reporting
• “Nice-guy” syndrome
• Limited sample
• Not thorough
• They’re probably just trying to get rid of you
What We Learned

- You can do it!
- Fancy software is nice, but not necessary
- Students are nice
- Informal doesn’t = bad
- You must go to them
What’s Next?

- Finalizing design
- Starting build
- IRB?
Thank you. The end.

- Images courtesy of [http://www.sxc.hu/](http://www.sxc.hu/) and Google images