Thinking Inside the Box to Build a Better Box

Kelly Agan
NC Government & Heritage Library
State Library of NC
Kelly.Agan@ncdcr.gov
NCpedia.org
**imagination**
noun
the faculty or action of forming new ideas, or images or concepts of external objects not present to the senses.

*she’d never been blessed with a vivid imagination*

*synonyms*: creative power, fancy, vision; informal mind’s eye, a vivid imagination.

- interest, fascination, attention, passion, curiosity
- the ability of the mind to be creative or resourceful.

*Synonyms*: creativity, imaginativeness, creativeness; vision, inspiration, inventiveness, invention, resourcefulness; ingenuity, originality, innovation, innovativeness.

- "you need imagination in dealing with these problems"

**innovation**
noun
the action or process of innovating.

*synonyms*: change, alteration, revolution, upheaval, transformation, metamorphosis, breakthrough; new measures, new methods, modernization, novelty, newness; creativity, originality, ingenuity, inspiration, inventiveness; informal a shake up

- "no appliance manufacturer can survive without an ongoing commitment to innovation"

- a new method, idea, product, etc.

*plural noun*: innovations

*“technological innovations designed to save energy”*

**research**
noun
1. the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions.

*We are fighting meningitis by raising money for medical research*

*Synonyms*: investigation, experimentation, testing, analysis, fact-finding, fieldwork, examination, scrutiny.

*verb*
1. investigate systematically.

*“she has spent the last five years researching her people’s history”*

*Synonyms*: examine, scrutinize, review

*“The phenomenon has been widely researched”*

- study, read, read up on, sit through, look into; informal check out

- "researched all the available material"
Vision
Imagination

NCpedia.org

Technology
Research
Best Practices
Roadmap
Design Techniques

The Stuff: Content, media, etc.
Mission + Goals
Uses
Boundaries
What's working/not working
What's hidden
What's missing
Use community + needs
Experts + Collaborators
Possibilities

Interface
Features
User Experience

Engagement
Today’s talk

Part I
Thinking inside the box
NCpedia quick tour

Part II
NCpedia’s redesign Toolkit

Part III
Home page redesign case study
Part I

“. . .in most organizations, innovation isn’t hampered by a lack of ideas, but rather a lack of noticing the ideas already there.”

-- David Burkus, Harvard Business Review

“Without leaps of imagination, or dreaming, we lose the excitement of possibilities. Dreaming, after all, is a form of planning.”

-- Gloria Steinem
Thinking inside the box: 2 “models”

[NCpedia]

1970 - 2016
The Online encyclopedia: we’re the same and we’re a little different
Part II: In the Box Toolkit

“Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.”

-- Zora Neal Hurston
Toolkit

Ask the right questions
Know the Box
Know the technical environment
Develop a framework
Articulate a vision
Define the critical content
Develop a project strategy and timeline
Conduct research and apply to decisions
Explore and record: scribble, doodle, draw
Our Box
Facts, realities, guiding assumptions & possibilities

Know our box: uses, boundaries, and potential
Know our use community and stakeholders
Align to institutional mission and goals
Know our tech
Know what’s working and what’s not
Find what’s hidden, find what’s missing
Imagine the possibilities
Tech

Infrastructure
Search
SEO

Upgrading and adapting
Bootstrap
Framework and vision

a better user experience

a graphical design for form and function

convert new visitors to returning readers

Responsive, mobile-first, trickle down design
Project strategy = a roadmap for integrating the necessary functional, visual and media components of our resource

Define the critical, must-have content
Selectively abandon the past
Remodel the familiar
Remove the seemingly necessary
Make the invisible visible
Support and justify with data
Project plan and timeline: 2014-2016
Research and data driven (re)design

Use statistics
Collection analysis
Needs assessment
Usability studies
Qualitative data

Best practice research
Other websites
Reading
Talking to experts
Our own ideas
Needs assessment and usability studies
Qualitative data:
Listening and engaging with viewers

Website comments
Live chat with librarians
Email
In person

I’m looking for...
I can’t find...
This didn’t help me.

I got an A on my project!!
yeah!!!!!
Best practices
Part III: Home page redesign case study
Design strategy:
Integrating the home page and collections
Prototyping a graphic approach to collections and search and find
Prototyping the home page
1801

North Carolina State Parks
History

The North Carolina state parks system has its beginnings in the conservation movements of the 1800s. In 1801, the state Geological Survey responded to concerns over environmental degradation and management of natural resources. With an inventory and assessment of the health of the state’s natural environment, conservation advocacy developed from the survey’s findings that included report of the destruction of the state’s mountain slopes.

Engagement
ROI and Value
Collaboration
Next steps
On the horizon

Filtered search: Solr
Drupal upgrade
Development of content and partnerships
Curation of content by reading level
Linked data sharing
New ways to foster engagement
Sustainable strategy for link rot
Lessons Learned

The art and science of constant de-briefing
Sharing is good karma
Document, document, document
Working with taxonomies
Tips

Amplify focus on process and content
Simplify project management tools
Study up
Be iterative: make changes, get feedback
Scribble, doodle, draw
Save your ideas
Embrace contradiction
Make friends with universities for research
Have fun
Questions?

Pliny the Elder, National Library of Medicine, from the Library of Congress PPOC.
Thank you!

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