

Website Usability Testing with Custom Tools in a Community College Environment

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ACRL New England Chapter Annual - May 4, 2018

BACKGROUND

- ▶ How to modify the library's webpage according to users needs?
- ▶ What type of information is needed to support updates?
- ▶ Why this is not a systematic effort?
- ▶ Challenges:
 - ▶ Librarians have to step up and lead this effort
 - ▶ Funding is needed

Definition

- ▶ Usability Test is a way to evaluate a service with your target-market customers. Focusing on user experience (UX) testing: measuring library users' (faculty and students) interactions with the library webpage.
- ▶ Usability testing involves actual target users and matches real-world experiences (Prototypes).

Process

- ▶ Requested a PSC-CUNY Grant and it was approved on September 2016.
- ▶ Redistributed the funds according to a plan and establish an incentive to recruit participants.
- ▶ Training course for investigators involved in Social/Behavioral Research with human subjects
- ▶ An exemption granted by the University Integrated Institutional Review Board during Fall/2016. Two reasons:
 - ▶ To be able to work with Faculty and students
 - ▶ To be able to publish our results

Process (cont.)

- ▶ It is an iterative approach in which the prototypes are redesigned constantly.
- ▶ A decision made to move all our webpages to CMS-LibGuides
- ▶ Establishing the different recruitment approaches.

Setting up the tasks

- ▶ Review our website
- ▶ Made a list of the different library services and collections available
- ▶ Listed the main areas we wanted to test
- ▶ Elaborated the questions base on the prototypes designed

Data gathering at scale

- ▶ Sample size: 225 students
- ▶ Automate the testing
- ▶ We put a lot of effort into building our own tools



Go

★ DREAMS BEGIN HERE ★

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LibGuides CMS



Pros

- ▶ Groups
- ▶ Group-level JavaScript and CSS
- ▶ Ease of building prototypes

Cons

- ▶ After a while, all LibGuides start to look the same

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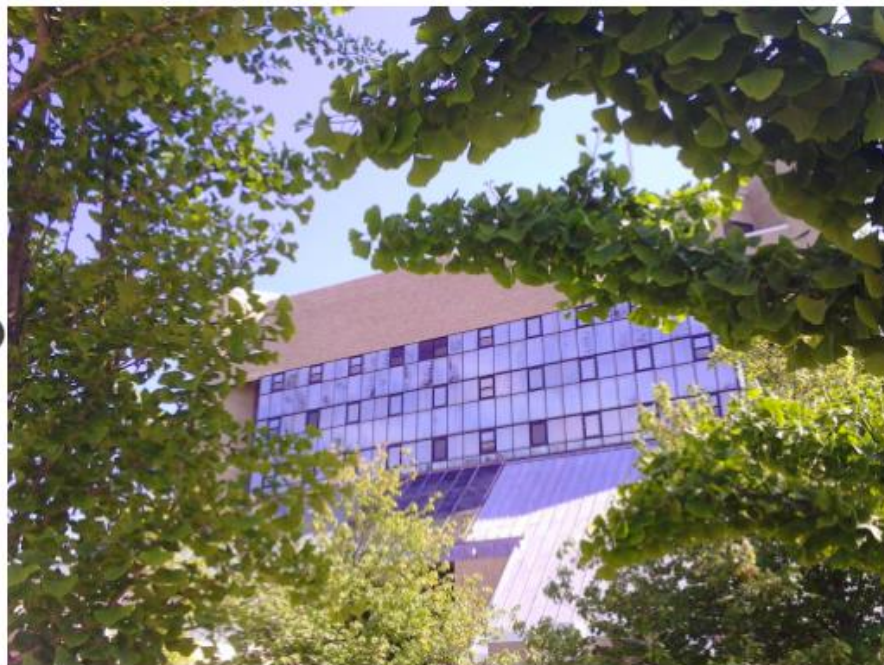
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- Search across many (but not all) library resources for articles, books, ebooks, DVDs, and other materials, on one convenient platform.
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Welcome to our usability test!

- Click on the buttons below to try the activities.
- In the left-hand window, you will be given instructions to complete your task.
- In the right-hand window you can attempt to complete your activity.
- Stop when you reach the page that says "Activity Completed", or when you feel that you have completed the task.
- Close the exercise window to move on to the next exercise.

Activity #1

Activity #2

Activity #3

Activity #4

Activity #5

Activity #3

Check to see if the book **The Goldfinch** is available to borrow for a four week period.

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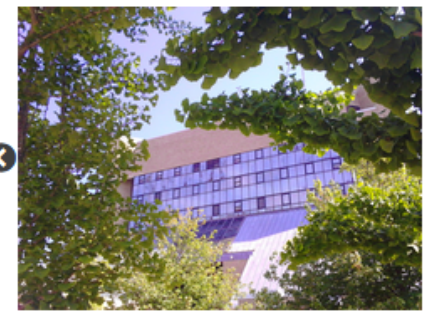
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The Library on social media

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Activity #3

Check to see if the book **The Goldfinch** is available to borrow for a four week period.

Congratulations!
Activity complete!
Close this tab to move on to the next one.

hotjar

DEVICE

1,957

22

21



TYPE

CLICK

MOVE

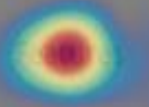
SCROLL



This heatmap is based on a sample of your total visitors. [Learn more.](#)

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All-in-one Analytics and Feedback.

Hotjar is a new and easy way to truly understand your web and mobile site visitors.
Identify your hottest opportunities for improvement using:



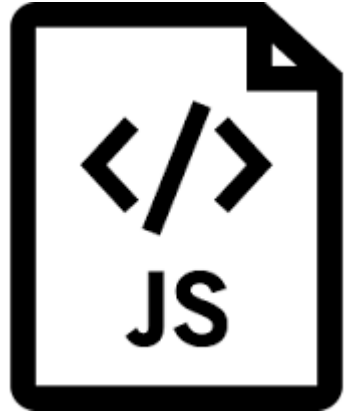
CLICKS RECORDED

1,211

HOT

COLD

- <http://kbcc.cuny.libguides.com/prototype1?cohort=2>
- <http://kbcc.cuny.libguides.com/prototype1?cohort=3>
- <http://kbcc.cuny.libguides.com/prototype1?cohort=4>

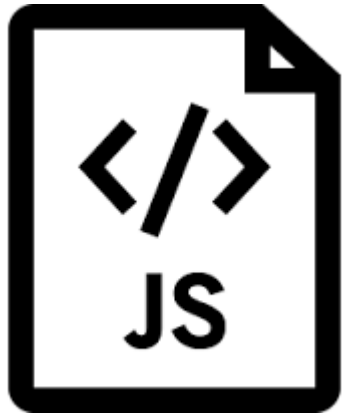


hotjar

Fail!

What we learned

- ▶ Test more rigorously
- ▶ Keep it simple
- ▶ Rely less on others' code



~~hotjar~~

How will we track
the data now?

Activity #3

Check to see if the book **The Goldfinch** is available to borrow for a four week period.

Congratulations!
Activity complete!
Close this tab to move on to the next one.

- ▶ http://usability.b7jl.org/?prototype=9&element=menu_periodicals
- ▶ http://usability.b7jl.org/?prototype=10&element=widget_catalog
- ▶ http://usability.b7jl.org/?prototype=12&element=box_calendar_hours



Flask

web development,
one drop at a time



- ▶ API?
- ▶ Web application?
- ▶ Microservice!



Data quality



Reliability



Hotjar visuals

\$12

- ▶ Existing approaches and tools did not meet our needs
- ▶ We built our own tools to fill the gap

github.com/MarkEEaton/usability-python
github.com/MarkEEaton/usability-testing-interface

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LibGuides

For detailed guides on many library-related topics, take a look at our LibGuides.

Library Hours

For Fall and Spring semesters:

- Monday to Thursday: 8am - 11pm
- Friday: 8am - 5pm
- Saturday and Sunday: 10am - 3pm

At other times see the Library Hours page.

Databases

- Try our alphabetical list of databases.
- Or our lists of databases by subject.

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Ask A Librarian

Email Reference

Send your questions to reference.desk@kbcc.cuny.edu. Inquiries will be answered in 48 hours or less.

Telephone Reference

Talk with a Kingsborough librarian from home. Call 718-368.5632 anytime when the Reference Desk is open (see Library Hours).

In Person Reference

Feel free to come and ask us a question at any time when the library is open!

Follow us on Twitter

Keep up-to-date on what the library is doing by following our twitter feed: @KBCCLibrary.

Library Closed?

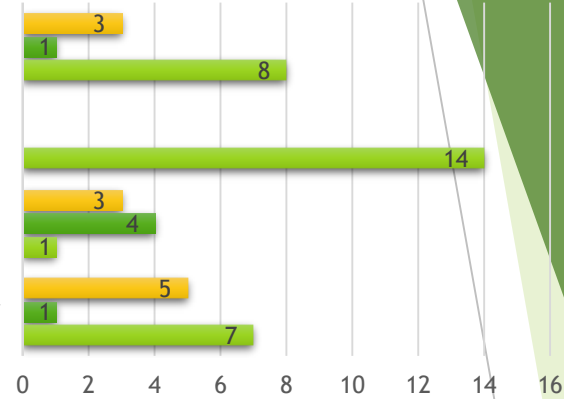
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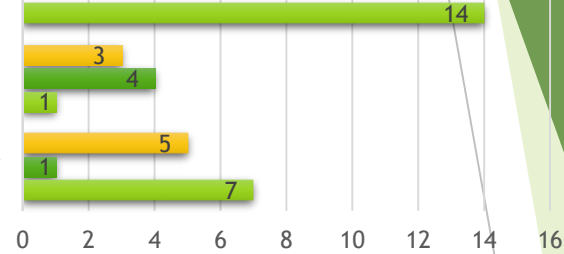
Menus are easier for users to navigate in a website

PROTOTYPE No. 10 - User Strategy

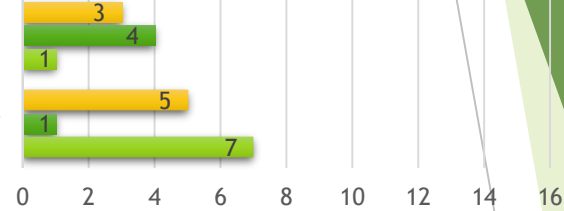
Search for scholarly articles on community college students (12)



Request an interlibrary loan (14)



Find the database JSTOR (8)



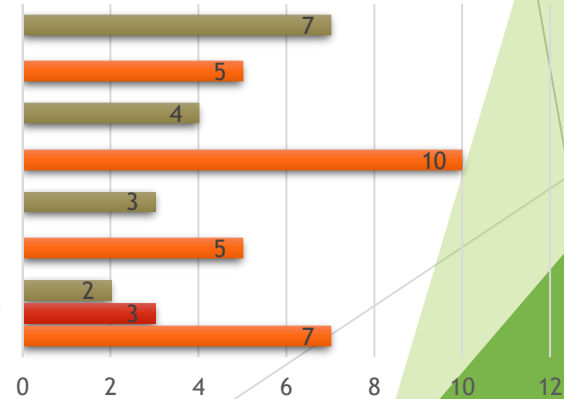
Find the book College Algebra: a narrative approach (13)



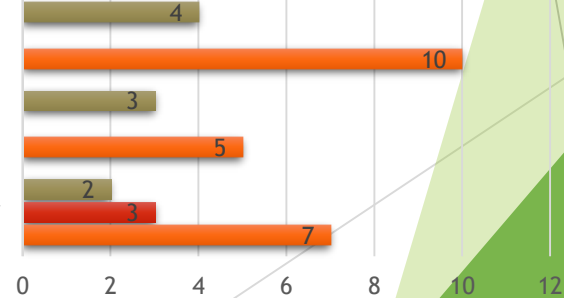
WIDGET BOX MENU

PROTOTYPE No. 10 - Answers

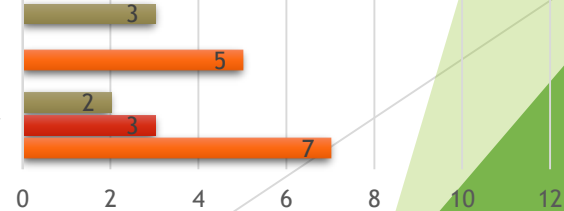
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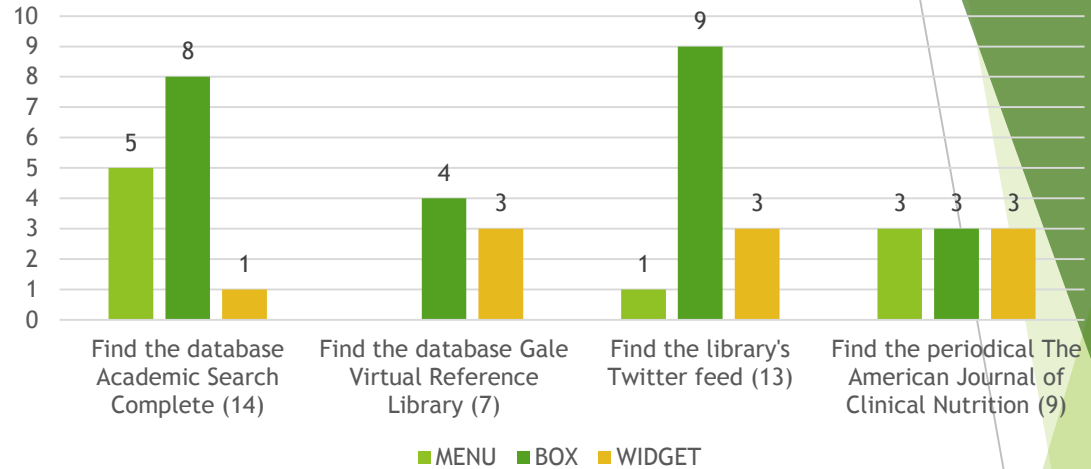
POOR ACCEPTABLE GOOD 33

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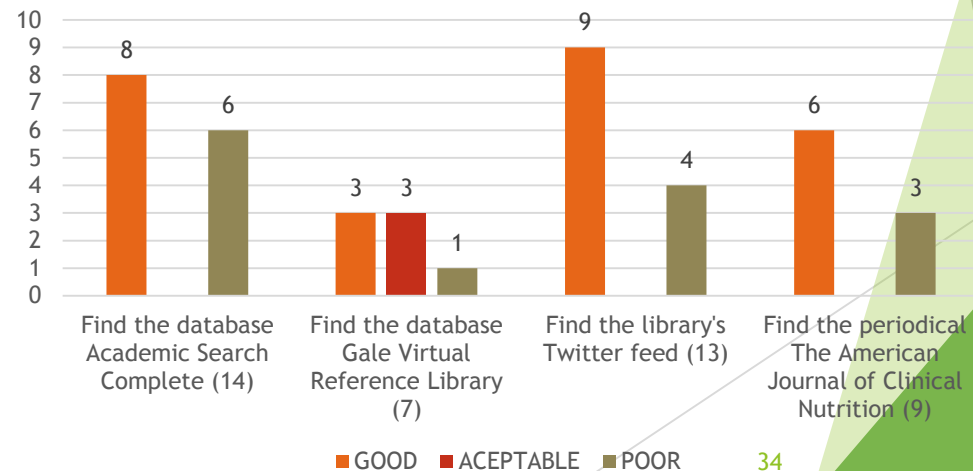


Users have a tendency to prefer the use of box type when given the option

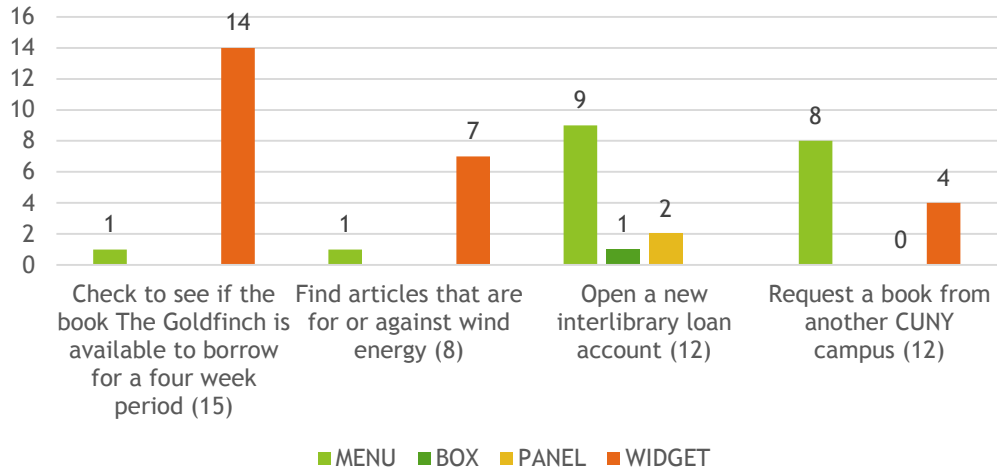
PROTOTYPE No. 13 - User Strategy



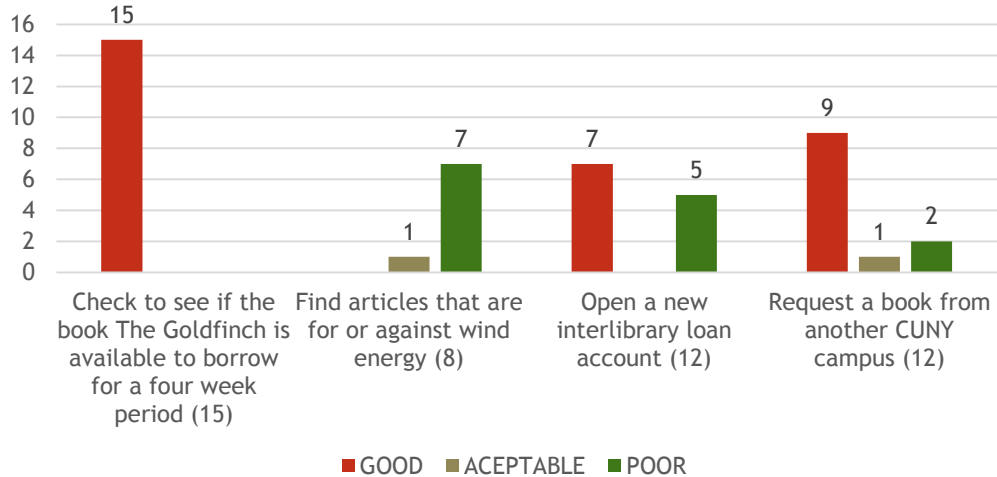
PROTOTYPE No. 13 - Answers



PROTOTYPE No. 12 - User Strategy



PROTOTYPE No. 12 - Answers



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The Library on social media

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- Goodreads

Widgets are an important point of access to information resources

Conclusions

- ▶ Usability testing should be an institutionalized and ongoing process.
- ▶ Testing is a basic support for website design
- ▶ Trouble finding tools for UX that meet our needs
- ▶ Difficulty communicating with IT Department and selling the idea.
- ▶ Time consuming process.

THANK YOU

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