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Ethnographically-inspired usability testing

Leah Rosenblum Emary
i3 Conference
Aberdeen, 24 June 2015



Background

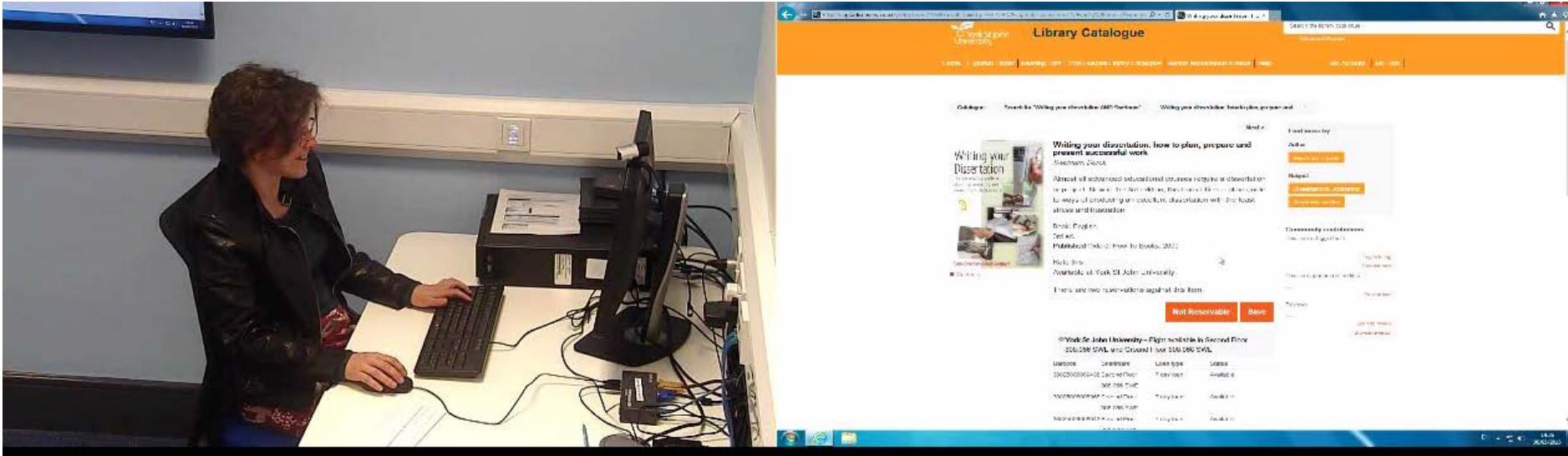
The screenshot shows the York St John University library search interface. At the top, there is a yellow header bar with the university logo, a search bar containing 'deleuze', and search options: 'Search the library's print holdings and e-books' (selected), 'Search everything including journal articles', and a link to 'Advanced search'. Below the header is a banner image of interlocking gold-colored gears. The main search results page has a green header bar with links to Home, E-journal Finder, Reading Lists, Report ebook/ejournal issue, Help, My Library Account, and My Lists. The search results table has a green header row with columns for 'Refine Your Search', 'Results 1 - 10 of 84', 'Sorted by Relevance', and 'Sort'. The 'Refine Your Search' sidebar includes sections for Format (Book, eBook, Electronic resource), Library Location (York St John University selected), Collection (Main Catalogue selected), and Year Published (1809 to 2015). The main results table shows 10 items, with item 1 highlighted in orange. Each result includes a thumbnail image, the title 'Deleuze', author 'By Due, Reidar', publication details ('Book. English. Published Cambridge: Polity, 2007'), a brief description ('Providing an introduction to the philosophy of Deleuze, this book offers an interpretation of his philosophy centred around the notion of thought as a...'), and buttons for 'Check Availability' and 'Save Details'.

Goals

- Observe the user's first experience of the catalog
- Questions to ask:
 - What do they think?
 - What works?
 - What doesn't work?
- Optimize the design and functionality before launch (August 2015)

Test design

- Ethnographically-inspired (Emary, forthcoming)
 - Small sample size drawn from our team's contacts
 - Relationship and rapport increase the richness
 - Relaxed, discussion-based lab setting
 - Freeform test scenarios
 - Think aloud protocol



- 1 moderator, 1 greeter, 1 technical support
- 12 participants thought aloud during individual time slots
- 3 scenarios (20-30 minutes)
- Video capturing gesture and affect as well as their screencast.

Testing day(s)

- Everyone showed up, engaged and enjoyed themselves
- Sweets, arts and crafts and discussion
- Voucher for a free hot drink from Costa Coffee
- Tests took place over the course of 2 weeks



Reception area outside the testing room.
Participants also created process maps while waiting for their test to begin.

How we managed things

Google Search Google Keep

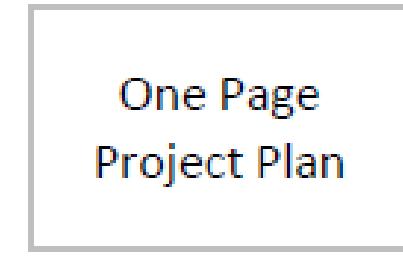
Notes

Add

Usability Testing

13-20 April – first PRISM design back
5-15 May – dates for usability testing to take place
18-21 May - data analysis and report written

8 April Room tour for Leah and Matt with Charlotte Elwell to assess suitability of Psych labs. The lab and equipment look great! It's possible to capture the screencast and have another simultaneous



Doodle®

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Mutually agree on a time

Enter your name in the input field below and check the box for times that you are available.

Catalogue Usability Testing

Poll initiated by Leah Emary & Matt Tams | 12 | 0 | 36 days ago

Where: Foss 212, York St John University

Please enter your name and choose one appointment for usability testing. Click the accordion to expand times; scroll right (Shift+scroll) to view full range.

Please note, participants may only choose one option. Please keep a record of your chosen time slot.

Table view Calendar view

This is a limited poll

Initial results

- Major and minor problems led to changes in:
 - layout
 - colours
 - link prominence
 - language
 - advanced search
- Confident that users will like the ‘look and feel’ of the new catalogue

 Accessing print books, including holding...	21/05/
 Account	21/05/
 Advanced search	21/05/
 Autofill suggestions	21/05/
 Availability & location in results list	21/05/
 Branding, look and feel	21/05/
 Ebooks	21/05/
 Filtering and facets	21/05/
 Issue with bibliographic record	21/05/
 Navigating and starting a new search	21/05/
 Ratings	21/05/
 Relevance & recall	21/05/
 Reserving button	21/05/
 Saving & exporting	21/05/
 Search everything & search print holding...	21/05/

Comments and problems coded in NVivo

Initial results

- The think aloud protocol is powerful
- The user believing they were doing the ‘right’ thing when they had actually made an error
- This happened consistently and pointed to a ‘major error’

The screenshot shows a library catalogue interface. At the top is the York St John University logo and a yellow banner featuring a close-up image of interlocking gears. Below the banner is a navigation bar with links for Home, E-journal Finder, Reading Lists, and York Hospital Library Catalogue. The main search results page has a header with 'Catalogue' and a search bar containing 'Search for "writing your dissertation"'. On the left, there's a sidebar titled 'Refine Your Search' with sections for Library Location (checked for York St John University), Collection (checked for Main Catalogue), and Subject. The Subject section lists categories like 'Dissertations, Academic (35)', 'Electronic Book (35)', 'Electronic books (30)', 'Academic Writing (24)', 'Report Writing (20)', and 'More...'. There's also a 'Year Published' section with a histogram chart showing a peak around 2010, and an 'Author' section listing McMillan, Wyse, Biggarn, Cottrell, Greetham, and others. The main results area displays three book covers for 'Planning Your Dissertation', 'Writing a Dissertation For Dummies', and 'Writing a Dissertation Dummies', each with its title, author, and a brief description.

Initial results

'Thank you for testing us properly. So many times we're asked for feedback on something in a way that's not productive.'

—RA1

Challenges

- Time, time, time
- Qualitative data is voluminous
- No undergraduate participants
- Prioritizing what we change
- Managing user expectations
- Balancing consistency with a natural, relaxed environment

What next?



Through a Jungle by andyw0n. <https://flic.kr/p/6XrXyT> Used under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

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Thank you

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