

Building a Better Library Website through Usability Testing

OLA 2016, Crystal Trice, crystal@wccls.org

BEFORE testing

1. Put everything on the table.
2. Know your audience.
3. Analyze what you have.
4. Take a survey.

Testing tips

1. Gain stakeholder buy-in.
2. Test the test.
3. Iterate (smarturl.it).
4. Invite by social media.
5. Schwag is a plus!
6. Keep it short.
7. Analyzing data takes the most time.
8. When in doubt, test again!

ACTION plan

Card sorts

Measures: how users group content together, and what they naturally call those groups

Good for: creating or testing menu navigation

How it works:

You: website → content → cards

Users: cards → groups → names

Options:

- Open (users name categories) or Closed (pre-determined categories)
- Live or Online
- DIY or Pay

Click tests

Measures: if users can make the correct first click when performing common tasks

Good for: testing menu navigation; discovering areas that need improvement

How it works:

You: scenarios → screenshot

Users: click

Options:

- Online or Paper
- Pay or DIY

Rocket Surgery

Measures: if users can successfully perform complex scenarios on a website, one-on-one with the tester

Good for: discovering room for improvement in well-established websites

How it works:

You: scenarios → take notes

Users: navigate while thinking aloud

Options:

- Video/audio recording for later notetaking