Where do we Stand? Evaluating Library Services with Service Design Heuristics

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What is Service Design?

"Service design is a holistic, co-creative, and user-centered approach to understanding customer/user behavior for the creation or refining of services."

Marquez, Joe J., and Annie Downey. 2015. "Service Design: An Introduction to a Holistic Assessment Methodology of Library Services." *Weave: Journal of Library User Experience* 1 (2). doi:10.3998/weave.12535642.0001.201.

Thinking Service Design - The SD Mindset

- Co-creation
- Making the intangible tangible
- Confirming with evidence
- Focus on user needs and expectations
- Holistic
- Empathetic
- Open-minded, or No Devil's Advocate
- A willingness to evolve

Where do we start?

Nielsen's "10 Usability Heuristics for User Interface Design"

10 Usability Heuristics for User Interface Design

by **JAKOB NIELSEN** on January 1, 1995
Topics: Heuristic Evaluation Human Computer Interaction Web Usability

Summary: Jakob Nielsen's 10 general principles for interaction design. They are called "heuristics" because they are broad rules of thumb and not specific usability guidelines.

Link: https://www.nngroup.com/articles/ten-usability-heuristics/

Library Service Design Heuristics

- Clarity of Purpose and Function
- Consistency of Delivery and Communication
- Context Appropriate
- Meeting Current Needs and Expectations
- Acceptable Interaction Costs (or Ease of Use)
- Empower User Autonomy
- Reasonable Duration and Tempo
- Welcoming/Delightful/Accessible

What are they good for?

Clarity of Purpose and Function

The purpose and function of the service is clear and obvious. The service addresses evidenced needs within the context of a specific library's unique ecology.

Questions

• Why is this service necessary? How is this service related to the library's mission?

• What is the evidenced need of the service?

• Who is the service for?

• Do users understand the purpose of the service?

• How does it function within the current library ecology?

Clarity of Purpose and Function

Meeting Current Needs and Expectations

Users' expectations are based on previous experiences with what they consider to be similar services. The service stands up to comparisons against similar services. As environmental inputs have changed (e.g., curriculum changes in a school program might require new collections or increased computer usage might require a more robust network or additional access to electricity), the service has adapted to those changing needs. The service provides the resources or technologies users need right now.

Questions

- Does the service meet current user needs and expectations? If not, how have needs changed? What additional resources are required as a result?
- Is it audience-appropriate? Or has the audience evolved faster than the service?
- What are some examples of similar services the user might encounter in the wild?
- How might those external services influence a user's expectation of this library service?
- What needs are being addressed by the service in its current form?

Meeting Current Needs and Expectations

2017

1934?

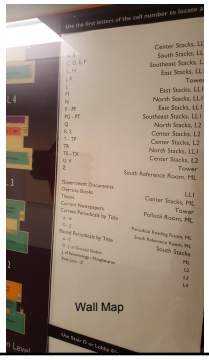
Consistency of Communication

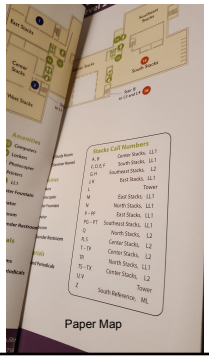
Communication across channels is clear and consistent. Language used is clear and modern and requires no additional explanation.

Questions

- Is similar language similar in the physical signage and on the website?
- Is signage clear and appropriately positioned?
- Is language up to date?
- Are verbal naming conventions the same as those used on printed maps or other official publications?
- Are policies enforced as described in a handbook or on the website?
- Is branding consistent across channels (or libraries)?

Consistency of Communication





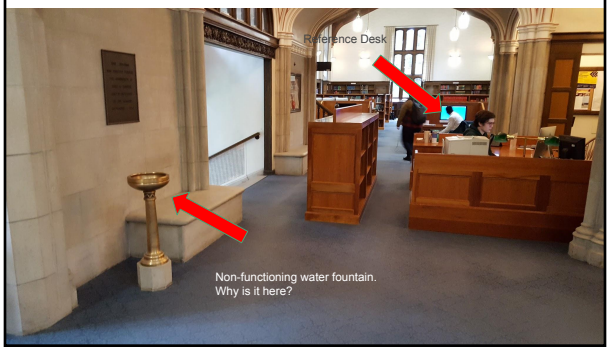
Context Appropriate

Services are highly contextual and should be designed to fit a specific location or ecology. The service fits within the context in which it is provided and is appropriate based on user expectations, needs, and service delivery methods.

Questions

- Is the service delivered at the point of need?
- Does the service fit where it is currently delivered?
- Is the service context-appropriate?

Context Appropriate



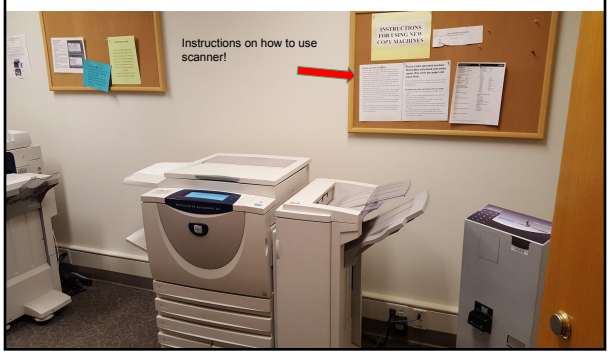
Acceptable Interaction Costs (or Ease of Use)

Interaction costs are the mental and/or physical efforts that a user must expend to use a service. The service makes sense to the user. Instructions, when necessary, are clear and concise and add value to the experience and do not assess additional costs on the user. When the time and energy to learn how to perform or complete a task outweighs the benefits gained from the task, the interaction costs are too high.

Questions

- Is it clear to the user how to use the service?
- Does the service require instructions? If yes, can they be elegantly integrated or explained in a way that minimizes confusion?
- Does the service constantly require library staff to explain how to perform the task?
- How long does it take to learn how to perform the task?
- Is the user required to have additional resources to perform a task? (e.g.,identification, pen or pencil, paper)
- Is the technology or process easy to adopt?
- Is the service easily understood by a beginner?

Acceptable Interaction Costs (or Ease of Use)



Empower User Autonomy

Not all users want to be helped. The service accommodates users who prefer to explore and learn on their own and allows them to undo what they have done in the event of a mistake.

Questions

- Does the service allow users to self-serve?
- Does the service allow users to self-serve without feeling she is being watched?
- Does the service allow for users to undo what they have done in the event of a mistake?
- Does the process of undoing feel neither shameful nor embarrassing?

Empower User Autonomy

Reasonable Duration and Tempo

The amount of time required to perform a task is reasonable for both users and service providers, given all factors involved. The amount of time to perform a task does not outweigh the benefit of completing it. Users have a sense of how they are progressing by receiving adequate feedback on where they are in the sequence of performing a task and how much more time is required to complete it. Reasonable duration and tempo applies to both users and service providers.

Questions

- How long does it take a user to perform a task? Is this a reasonable amount of time for that user?
- Is this service delivered in the fewest possible steps?
- Are there appropriate feedback mechanisms to inform users where they are in their journey?
- How long does the service take to perform?
- How much time is required for a user to navigate an interface?
- Are there policies in place limiting the amount of time a user may use the service?
- If a user must wait to use the service, is that duration reasonable and clear?

Reasonable Duration and Tempo

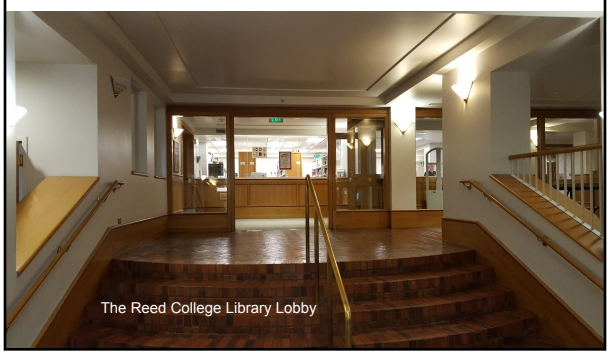
Welcoming

Libraries are public, yet personal. They are often referred to as "third places" (i.e., not home, not work, but a special "other" place) because of the role they play in the lives of our users. The library and the service are not only pleasant to experience, but also desirable to use. The service is welcoming to all user populations.

Questions

- Is the space or service inviting? Would your users find it inviting?
- Is it comfortable? Is it clean?
- Can users navigate the space, website, or interface with little or no difficulty?
- Does it accommodate diverse user behaviors?
- Is it a place where users would want to read, research, do homework, or browse the collection?

Welcoming



The Reed College Library Lobby

Accessible

The Library and its services should accommodate, as best possible, the range of behaviors of all users. Users requiring additional assistance are not made to feel different when accessing the library's services. Services are available and understandable for users requiring additional assistance.

Questions

- Does the space fit the users, or must the users fit the space?
- Are the space and services accessible?
- When a service is not fully accessible, are reasonable accommodations made?
- Is it clear how to request accommodations?
- Are instructions clear and positioned at the right height for all users?
- When additional help is needed, is access to help readily available?
- Are services clear to all users? Do all channels demonstrate services for all users? Are available services publicized?

Accessible

How it all works

-2 0 +2

The Heuristic Evaluation

Review: Scanners/Copiers

Clarity of Purpose and Function To make duplicates/copies of articles and books	**Consistency of Delivery and Communication** Try make sense - if you can figure out how to operate
Context Appropriate The resources are mostly in room. And they are noisy - so book is a closet is helpful.	**Meeting Current Needs and Expectations** Students need a lot training helper some is printing work
Acceptable Interaction Costs (or Ease of Use) No! Too many instructions. Never is useful!	**Empower User Autonomy** Only if user can figure out how to use.
Reasonable Duration and Tempo No. Stop early for beginner.	**Welcoming/Delightful/Accessible** not delightful! not accessible - too high for person in wheelchair

Overall Score

Group Activity

Possible Services to Review

Some possible examples:

- Coffee shop
- Registering for a conference
- Travelling
- Post Office
- Getting help from service provider (eg. cable or mobile carrier)
- Grocery store

Questions

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Contact Us!

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