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## MLibrary Website - Search/Browse Card Sort

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*Downloaded from Deep Blue, University of Michigan's institutional repository*



# Usability Report Cover Sheet

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|------------------------|---|
| Project                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overall Project: MLibrary Website</li><li>• Project Title: Search/Browse Card Sort</li></ul>  |
| Committee & Members    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Usability Group: Suzanne Chapman (chair), Shevon Desai, Kat Hagedorn, Julie Piacentine, Ken Varnum</li><li>• Usability Task Force: Mike Creech (stakeholder), Kat Hagedorn (co-convener), Gillian Mayman, Devon Persing, Ken Varnum (co-convener), Valerie Waldron, Susan Wortman</li></ul> |
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## ***Introduction***

The MLibrary Website provides options for users to search or browse the content of the site. The results pages for these features sort resources into different sections by type. Each of these sections is labeled with a heading to indicate the source of the results.

The goal for this test was to determine the order of the headings on the search results page and the browse results page. Additionally, the Task Force asked the meanings of the current headings and possible changes to the heading names.

\* This report describes a usability assessment performed by the MLibrary Usability Group and Task Force. Usability assessment is a part of the iterative design process used to develop new systems and services at MLibrary. This report describes one test in a series of tests performed at one point in the iterative design process. Sample sizes are small and findings serve only as clues to help guide decisions. Implementation of any recommendations should take these limitations into account.

## Test Description & Methodology

### Test Description

To assess the search and browse results headings, participants were placed in front of a computer and, starting from the MLibrary homepage, were asked to search or browse on a topic that they had looked for recently. Half of the participants were asked to search and half of the participants were asked to browse. After viewing the results screen, participants were given a sheet of paper with two columns and a set of cards with the names of the headings written on them. Participants were then asked to sort the cards into the two-column format in a way that would be most useful to them. Participants were also asked if they had alternate suggestions for the headings.

At the time of this test, headings for the search results page were ordered as follows (see Appendix 2 for screen shots):

Search Results Column 1	Search Results Column 2
Catalog (Mirlyn) Electronic Journals Databases	Website: Research Guides Website Website: Collections Website: Government Documents Deep Blue (Institutional Repository)

And headings for the browse results page were ordered as follows:

Browse Results Column 1	Browse Results Column 2
Electronic Journals Databases	Research Guides MLibrary Website New Books

### Methodology

- Guerilla Test
- 6 participants assessed the search results page and 6 different participants assessed the browse results page
- Individuals were recruited for the test near the reference desk in the Graduate Library
- The test took approximately 5 minutes
- Participants each received two Blue Bucks for their time

## **Results and Recommendations**

### **Search Results**

- 1. Place the "Website" heading in the first position in the second column**  
Five of six participants placed "Website" in the first position in the second column.
- 2. Rename "Website: Collections"**  
Participants were unclear about the meaning of the heading "Website: Collections." There was additional confusion between "Website: Collections" and "Electronic Journals." (Additionally, many participants did not understand what "Deep Blue (Institutional Repository)" meant.) No replacement suggestions were given.
- 3. Consider renaming "Website: Research Guides" or providing additional explanation**  
Although only one participant expressed confusion over the heading "Research Guides", it was unclear whether the other participants truly understood the heading. The Research Guides Usability Report (<http://www.lib.umich.edu/node/22138>) may resolve some issues around this label.
- 4. Add additional information to the "Catalog (Mirlyn)" results, e.g., date, author, etc.**  
One participant felt that book titles were "not enough information to go on" in the search results. Discussion of this issue with the Usability Task Force resulted in agreement that this was an issue that should be improved with additional information in the Catalog results.

### **Browse Results**

- 1. Reorder the left column with "Databases" in the top position and "Electronic Journals" in the second position**  
Four out of six participants placed "Databases" in the top position in the left column and four participants placed "Electronic Journals" in the second position in either the left or the right column.
- 2. Highlight "Research Guides"**  
Two participants were confused by the heading "Research Guides" and the remaining four participants appeared to be indifferent to the heading. Despite these results, discussion with the Usability Task Force indicated that the Library wants to encourage users to use the Research Guides section. To make it more visible to users, "Research Guides" should be highlighted with an explanatory tagline and a graphical element such as a colored background, icon, etc. See Search Results Recommendation #3 for additional feedback.

### **General Recommendations**

- 1. Rename the headings to mirror one another on the search and browse results pages**  
Although this was not tested, the fact that the heading names on the search and the browse results pages do not mirror one another is confusing and seemingly unnecessary. The Usability Task Force recommends changing the headings so they match. Examples of

inconsistency include "Website" vs. "MLibrary Website" and "Website: Research Guides" vs. "Research Guides."

## **2. Further studies**

Further study should be done on the content of the results pages to see if headings should be more consistent, if users really understand the types of resources that are available, and other big-picture issues related to how users interact with these features.

## ***Lessons Learned***

- Participants were happy to help.
- It was good to have a computer screen with the actual web site in addition to the paper for the card sort exercise.
- Because many of the participants did not seem to care about the content under many of the headings, they did not seem to have completely thoughtful responses to the sorting task and especially to the question regarding the names of the headings.
- This guerrilla test was effective for determining a useful order for the most popular headings in the search and browse results. Follow-up tests would be useful for gaining insight into what would be most useful to users in the search and browse results outside of the constraints of the headings, whether users actually understand each of the headings and what they find below them, and how the search and browse results reflect one another.

## **Appendix 1: Test Script**

**1.** Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm a librarian here at the University. I'm part of a group working to make the Library website better. Could you spare about 5 minutes to do a test for us? We can offer you a couple of Blue Bucks for your help.

[If they answer No:]

No problem. Thanks for your time.

[If they answer Yes:]

Thanks a lot. This may seem weird, but I'm going to read from this script to make sure we give everyone who talks to us today the same information. My colleague \_\_\_\_\_ here will take some notes as we talk. Before we start, what is your status at the university?

[Note their affiliation: faculty, undergrad student, grad student, staff, visiting scholar, etc.]

Thanks. First, let's start at the website homepage.

[Bring up the library homepage.]

**2a.** Have you ever searched on the library website?

[Note their answer.]

Using the search feature at the top of the home page, could you do a search for something you did research on recently?

[Have the user do a search however they'd like. If they don't have a topic in mind, ask their field of study/work or what their next class is and construct something out of that.]

Okay. This is what the search results page looks like now. You'll notice that the page has results divided up by information type, in two columns, and each section has a heading. Each section heading is listed on one of these cards. Could you put them in an order that's most useful for you in your research, using that same two column format?

[Have the user sort the cards in their ideal order. Answer any questions they have about what the section headings represent. Note both questions and the final sort order.]

Thanks. Now, what do you think about what the headings say? Do you think any of them should be called something else?

[Note any suggestions.]

**2b.** Have you used the browse feature before?

[Note their answer.]

Using the browse feature at the top of the home page, could you look up something you did research on recently?

[Have the user do a browse however they'd like. If they don't have a topic in mind, ask their field of study/work or what their next class is and construct something out of that.]

Okay. This is what the browse results page looks like now. You'll notice that the page has results divided up by information type, in two columns, and each section has a heading. Each section heading is listed on one of these cards. Could you put them in an order that's most useful for you in your research, using that same two column format?

[Have the user sort the cards in their ideal order. Answer any questions they have about what the section headings represent. Note both questions and the final sort order.]

Thanks. Now, what do you think about what the headings say? Do you think any of them should be called something else?

[Note any suggestions.]

**3.** While we're here, do you have any questions or comments about the library website?

[Note any comments.]

Thanks so much for your time. We really appreciate it. Here are your Blue Bucks. Have a great day!



## Appendix 2: Screenshots

Example search results page:

The screenshot shows the MLibrary search results page for the query 'dermatology'. The page layout includes a header with the MLibrary logo and navigation links, a search bar with the query 'dermatology', and a 'Browse' section with a subject dropdown menu. The main content area is divided into several columns: 'Search Results for dermatology' with a 'Home > MLibrary Search' link and a note about using 'Browse' for specific subjects; 'Catalog (Mirlyn)' showing 1-10 of 1284 results with a list of journal titles; 'Electronic Journals' showing 1-10 of 82 results with a list of journal titles; 'Databases' with a note that no results were found; 'Website: Research Guides' showing 1-1 of 1 result; 'Website' showing 1-5 of 10 results with a list of resources; 'Website: Collections' with a note that no results were found; 'Website: Government Documents' with a note that no results were found; 'Deep Blue (Institutional Repository)' showing 1-5 of 270 results with a list of articles; 'Library Contacts' featuring a profile for Patricia Anderson, an Emerging Technologies Librarian; and an 'Ask a Librarian' button with a question mark icon.

Example browse results page:

The screenshot shows the MLibrary website interface. At the top left is the MLibrary logo and 'UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN'. Navigation links include 'About MLibrary', 'Services', 'Libraries', 'MGet It', 'Search Tools', and 'Catalog (Mirlyn)'. A search bar contains 'Find books, journals, databases, web pages' and a 'go' button. A 'Browse' dropdown menu is set to '- Select a Subject -'. A 'Get Help' section includes 'Ask a Librarian' and 'Using the Library'.

The main content area is titled 'Browse Results for Dermatology'. It includes a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > MLibrary Browse > Dermatology'. Below the title is a summary: 'This is an overview of library resources related to Dermatology. See the Research Guides listed below for librarian-recommended resources on this topic.' To the right, there is a 'Contact a specialist for in-depth research information on Dermatology.' link.


Resources are categorized into three columns:

- Electronic Journals** (1-5 of 79):
  - [The Journal of investigative dermatology.](#)
  - [British journal of dermatology.](#)
  - [Contact dermatitis.](#)
  - [Archives of dermatology.](#)
  - [Experimental dermatology](#)
  - [more ...](#)
- Research Guides** (1-1 of 1):
  - [Dermatology](#)
  - This guide provides information on resources in the field dermatology.
- MLibrary Website**: No results found

**Databases** (1-5 of 13):

- [AccessMedicine](#)  
AccessMedicine offers a complete suite of clinical and educational content from leading books, including Harrison's P...
- [CDSR \[UM-MEDSEARCH\]](#)  
The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews includes the full text of the regularly updated systematic reviews of the...
- [ISI Web of Knowledge](#)  
Provides cross-search of multiple databases: ISI Web of Science with Conference Proceedings (citation indexes), Curre...
- [MD Consult](#)  
MD Consult is a comprehensive collection of medical information including MEDLINE, full-text reference books, practic...
- [Micromedex Knowledge Bases](#)  
An integrated set of clinical decision support knowledge bases, including DRUGDEX, TOMES, MARTINDALE, EMERGINDEX, REP...
- [more ...](#)

**Library Contacts**

 **Patricia Anderson**  
Emerging Technologies Librarian,  
Health Sciences Libraries (Senior Associate Librarian)  
patriciaanderson@gmail.com  
734 615 1513

## **Appendix 3: Raw Data**

### Search Results

#### **P1.**

Status: Undergraduate, Senior  
Experience with search function: Yes  
Topic searched: El Salvador  
Suggestions for Column 1: CM | EJ | D | DB  
Suggestions for Column 2: W | WRG | WGD | WC  
Feedback on the headings: I don't know what Deep Blue is  
Additional feedback on web site: none

#### **P2.**

Status: Undergraduate  
Experience with search function: No  
Topic searched: Kurosawa  
Suggestions for Column 1: CM | WC  
Suggestions for Column 2: WRG  
Feedback on the headings: Do not care about the other headings  
Additional feedback on web site: none

#### **P3.**

Status: Graduate school applicant  
Experience with search function: Yes  
Topic searched: hindu muslim conflict india  
Suggestions for Column 1: CM | EJ  
Suggestions for Column 2: W | WC | D | WGD | DB  
Feedback on the headings: What about Books? What is Deep Blue and Website: Collections?  
Additional feedback on web site: Always gets someone to help with their search because she is never sure she gets everything

#### **P4.**

Status: Graduate school applicant  
Experience with search function: No  
Topic searched: hindu muslim conflict india  
Suggestions for Column 1: CM | EJ  
Suggestions for Column 2: WS | D | WGD  
Feedback on the headings: Website: Research Guides, Website Collections, and Deep Blue are confusing headings  
Additional feedback on web site: Would like to see additional information about the books in the search results

#### **P5.**

Status: Undergraduate  
Experience with search function: Very little  
Topic searched: Curse of the Black Gold  
Suggestions for Column 1: CM  
Suggestions for Column 2: W  
Feedback on the headings: The order of the other headings doesn't matter. "Looks good

enough to me.”

Additional feedback on web site: none

**P6.**

Status: Undergraduate, Freshman

Experience with search function: Yes

Topic searched:lepanto

Suggestions for Column 1: CM | D | EJ | WGD

Suggestions for Column 2: W | WC | WRG | DB

Feedback on the headings: Excited by the task

Additional feedback on web site: There is a lot on it, it is important to the patron that he is able to find what he needs but he had trouble finding things at first with the new web site

Browse Results

**P1.**

Status: Law Student

Experience with browse function: No

Topic searched: Government, Politics, and Law -> Law and Legal Studies

Suggestions for Column 1: D | RG | EJ

Suggestions for Column 2: MW | NB

Feedback on the headings: none

Additional feedback on web site: The web site has gotten a lot better although it is difficult to find specific databases and he has to memorize ways to get places

**P2.**

Status: Undergraduate, Freshman

Experience with browse function: No

Topic searched: Humanities General

Suggestions for Column 1: DB | RG | NB

Suggestions for Column 2: EJ | MW

Feedback on the headings: none

Additional feedback on web site: none

**P3.**

Status: Undergraduate, Freshman

Experience with browse function: Yes

Topic searched: Science -> Science (General)

Suggestions for Column 1: D | RG

Suggestions for Column 2: MW | EJ

Feedback on the headings: The New Books heading can go in either column

Additional feedback on web site: “For the most part I like it”

**P4.**

Status: Undergraduate

Experience with browse function: No

Topic searched: Science

Suggestions for Column 1: D | EJ | NB

Suggestions for Column 2: MW | RG

Feedback on the headings: Not sure what Research Guides are

Additional feedback on web site: “I like the databases thing”

**P5.**

Status: Undergraduate, Senior

Experience with browse function: Maybe

Topic searched: Social Sciences -> Economics

Suggestions for Column 1: MW | EJ | RG

Suggestions for Column 2: D | NB

Feedback on the headings: More explanation is needed for Research Guides

Additional feedback on web site: Not familiar with the site

**P6.**

Status: Graduate student

Experience with browse function: Some

Topic searched: Humanities -> English Language and Literature

Suggestions for Column 1: RG | D | NB

Suggestions for Column 2: MW | EJ

Feedback on the headings: none

Additional feedback on web site: Happy with the new catalog. Likes the chunks in the search results because she can search for anything and will find it in the results.