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Staff Intranet - Internet-based Survey Report

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Project Cover Sheet

Project	<p>Library Staff Intranet</p> <p><i>Internet-based Survey</i></p> <p>The Library Staff Intranet is a gateway to various library staff administrative information and tasks. It suffers from usability, findability and accessibility problems.</p>
Committee & Members	<p>UM Library Web Systems</p> <p>Ken Varnum, Kat Hagedorn</p> <p>Saurabh Koparkar (student intern)</p>
Report Info	<p>Report Author(s): Saurabh Koparkar</p> <p>Contact Information: lws-usability@umich.edu</p> <p>Report Date: August 2008; Last Revised: September 2008</p>
Objectives	<p>The goal of the Internet-based Survey was to determine staff opinions about particular category labels, and see if participants have ideas about new labels and content.</p>
Methodology	<p>Method – Internet-based Survey</p> <p>Dates of study: August 2008</p>
Results & Analysis	<p>Recommendations for changes and additions to category labels from the Card Sorting test were identified.</p>
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add certain links to ‘Quick Links’ and footer sections.• Make the <i>Search</i> and <i>Advanced Search</i> functions more effective.• Change the label and content of ‘Documents you might want to read’.• Place the <i>Usability in the Library</i> on the Library web site or in the ‘Quick Links’ section.

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1 Introduction

The University of Michigan Library Staff Intranet website (<http://lib.umich.edu/staff/>) needs to be redesigned to make the web interface more usable and simple. The current Intranet homepage is a collection of web links not organized into appropriate categories with headings that can help in easy navigation and findability. During the Focus Group that was conducted, it was seen that library staff face a number of problems while using the Intranet, the main problem being the inability to find what they are looking for in the Intranet. Based on these findings and by focusing on the navigation problems, a re-design of the Intranet homepage was proposed and drafted. This design (see Appendix B) was tested and a Card Sorting test was also conducted to find out how the staff made categories out of the links on the Intranet homepage. After this test was conducted, an Internet-based Survey of the proposed redesign was also conducted. This report contains the details of the survey findings and recommendations for the Intranet redesign that have been generated based on the survey results and analysis.

2 Methodology

A Focus Group was conducted before the Card Sort test to give an opportunity for library staff to express their opinions about the Intranet. A few findings from the focus group were not tested in the Card Sort test. The survey was chosen as a way to test these findings (in addition to repeating findings from the Card Sort test with a wider audience). For instance, the survey consists of a question that asks the staff if they like the current ‘Search’ and ‘Advanced Search’ features and if they would like to change anything about these features.

The Focus Group participants had a lot to say about the ‘Documents you might want to read’ section. They felt that the label for this section was too wordy and should be replaced because it confused the participants regarding the content in this section. The participants also said that they wanted the content in this section to be changed. The survey contains four questions about this section. The staff is asked an open-ended question about what kind of documents they would like to see in this section. The staff is also asked if they like the current label of this section and are given three labels that could replace the current label. Finally, staff can also suggest their own labels in an open-ended question.

The Card Sorting test results produced significant findings. The testers seemed to like a ‘Quick Links’ section, which would contain frequently-visited web links from the Staff Intranet homepage. A ‘Footer’ for the Intranet homepage that was proposed was also liked by the testers. The survey was chosen as a method that would gather quantitative data to confirm the acceptance or rejection of the web links to be included in ‘Quick Links’ and Footer (see Appendix B).

From the categories that were recommended after conducting the Card Sort tests, it was observed that the *Usability in the Library* section did not have an appropriate fit in any of the four categories. So, the survey was chosen as a way to find out from the Staff where they would like to see this section. The Staff were given four choices ‘Documents you might want to read’, ‘Footer’, ‘Quick Links’, ‘Library Gateway (www.lib.umich.edu)’ and an ‘Other’ option to allow the Staff to suggest any other web page where they would want to see this section.

The survey (see Appendix A) was created and launched using www.surveygizmo.com. The survey was live for fourteen days. Seventy-eight library staff members responded to the survey.

3 Findings

3.1 Links in the ‘Quick Links’ Category

The staff were given seven links that could be included in the ‘Quick Links’ category on the Intranet homepage and were asked to select all the links that they would like to see in this category (Question #1). The following results show the popularity of the seven web links (inclusion in category):

- Library Staff Directory – 87%
- Library Tech Support – 71%
- Library Newsletter – 55%
- Documents you might want to read – 37%
- Meeting Rooms – 33%
- Librarians’ Forum – 22%
- RSS Feeds – 22%

3.2 Search and Advanced Search features

The survey had two questions about the *Search* and *Advanced Search* features. One question asked the staff if it liked these current features or not (Question #2). The other question was an open-ended essay type that gathered opinions from library staff about what they would like to change in these features (Question #3). The following findings were gathered from the results of these questions:

- 62% of the respondents liked the current *Search* and *Advanced Search* features while 38% of the respondents did not like the current *Search* and *Advanced Search* features.
- A few respondents felt that the *Advanced Search* feature was not obvious to them. They were not able to locate this link in the Intranet homepage—the link was not visible to them.
- Quite a few respondents felt that the *Advanced Search* options should be changed. For example, quotes should be used for phrase searches instead of an advanced search phrase

search option box. Another respondent suggested that since librarians knew the usage of Boolean operators, there was no need to have advanced search functionality.

- Many respondents felt that the search results were not good and trustworthy. It was suggested that the search results should be restricted to Library newsletter or library pages. It was also observed that the staff wanted to add different filters to search results such as filter by date or file format.

3.3 Links in the ‘Footer’ Category

The staff were given six web links that could be included in the ‘Footer’ that will be present in the Intranet homepage and were asked to select all the web links that they would like to see in this category (Question #4). The following results show the popularity of the six web links (inclusion in category):

- Library Gateway – 74%
- Desktop Support Services (DSS) – 73%
- Library Human Resources – 71%
- Wolverine Access – 49%
- U-M Gateway – 46%
- CTools – 26%

3.4 Content in ‘Documents you might want to read’ Section

The respondents were asked an open-ended question (Question #5) in which they could list the content they wanted to see in this section of the Intranet. This question gathered a variety of responses. The common content types that were observed are listed below:

- Committee reports
- Meeting minutes
- Standards and practices guides
- Library Staff Manual
- Presentations from Library Updates
- Mission Statements
- Forms for taking leave of absence
- UM’s salary survey
- New policies
- White papers related to library staff
- Task force reports
- Personnel Transaction form
- Travel request form
- To do list for new employees
- Organization charts for Library departments
- Training Materials

One respondent made an interesting suggestion that all the documents in this section should be periodically archived, in the manner that the Library Newsletter is archived, so that this section would contain only the latest documents.

3.5 ‘Documents you might want to read’ Label

When asked if they liked or disliked this label (Question #6), a significant majority of respondents (68%) did not like this label while 32% of the respondents did like it.

3.6 Label suggestions for replacing ‘Documents you might want to read’

Respondents were given three choices that could be possible replacements for the current label for this category present in the Intranet homepage and were asked to select all the suggested labels that they considered appropriate (Question #7). The following results show the popularity of the three suggested labels (inclusion in category):

- ‘Useful Documents & Reports’ – 47%
- ‘Documents of Interest’ – 28%
- ‘Hot Topics’ – 17%
- None of the above – 21%

3.7 Label suggestions by staff for replacing ‘Documents you might want to read’

The respondents were asked an open-ended question (Question #8) in which they could suggest labels that would replace the current label of this section of the Intranet. This question gathered a variety of responses for label replacements. The labels that were found common across the responses and which stood out are listed below:

- ‘Of Interest to Read’
- ‘Documentation’, ‘Current documents of interest’, ‘Recent documents of interest’, ‘Documents’, ‘Recent Documents’, ‘Documents & Reports’ – these labels were more or less similar in meaning and were the most common suggestions
- ‘Useful Reports’
- ‘ReadMe’
- ‘Library News & Reports’
- “Recommended Readings: Documents that the University Library wants to bring to your attention” - this is an interesting label because it explains the purpose of this section effectively, even though it is too wordy
- ‘Updates and News’

3.8 Location of *Usability in the Library* Section

The survey consisted of a question that asked the staff where they would like to see the web link *Usability in the Library* in the Intranet and/or the library web pages (Question #9). The results of this question are described below:

- 28% of the respondents considered ‘Quick Links’ to be an appropriate category that would include the *Usability in the Library* section.
- 26% of staff respondents wanted the *Usability in the Library* section to be included in the Library Gateway web page (www.lib.umich.edu).
- 18% of the respondents felt that the *Usability in the Library* section should be located in the ‘Documents you might want to read’ category.
- Only one staff member thought that the *Usability in the Library* section could be placed in the footer of the Intranet homepage.
- A few respondents felt that the *Usability in the Library* section should be included in two locations - the Library Gateway (www.lib.umich.edu) and the Intranet homepage, but not inside any category.
- A few respondents considered the *Usability in the Library* section to be a committee and therefore wanted to include this section in the ‘Library Departments & Committees’ category that has been recommended in the Intranet redesign.
- Some respondents wanted the *Usability in the Library* section to be a part of the ‘Web Development Resources’ category.

4 Recommendations

- A ‘Quick Links’ category that will include all seven links that were tested in the survey should be present in the redesign of the Intranet homepage. These quick links should contain the most frequently visited links by staff and hence will be easier to locate and access (see Appendix B).
- The Intranet should have a footer on the homepage and also on all other web pages. The footer should contain all the five web links which have been tested in this survey, with the possible exception of *CTools* (see Appendix B).
- The current *Search* and *Advanced Search* features are liked by the majority of the staff respondents (see Finding 3.2). Even so, there are certain improvements that can be recommended for obtaining better functionality from these features. These improvements include: making the *Advanced Search* web link more visible and prominent in the web interface, changing *Advanced Search* options to allow for more efficient searching, restricting the search results to library web pages and/or library newsletter web pages, and providing an option to filter search results by date or file format.

- A large majority of the respondents did not like the label ‘Documents you might want to read’. Out of the three new labels that were suggested, the respondents liked the label ‘Useful Documents & Reports’, the most. Another possible replacement could be ‘Documents of Interest’ which was also liked by staff. Out of the labels suggested by the staff, ‘Recommended Readings: Documents that the University Library wants to bring to your attention’ is an interesting choice for a replacement. Though this label is wordy and long, it aptly describes the contents of this category, and could be used to describe the category instead of labeling it.
- The *Usability in the Library* section could be included in the ‘Quick Links’ category as some of the respondents considered this category to be an appropriate place for this section. Other possible locations for this section are the ‘Web Development Resources’ category, the ‘Library Gateway’ web page or the ‘Documents you might want to read’ category.

5 Conclusion

The web-based survey that was conducted to validate the redesign draft of the University of Michigan Library Staff Intranet homepage and the findings gathered from the Card Sorting test and from the Focus Group activity were successful exercises in making formal recommendations for the redesign of the Staff Intranet homepage. This survey had a broader reach compared to previous testing methodologies and was useful in understanding Library Staff expectations and needs regarding the Intranet. The recommendations made in this report would certainly be worth exploring and implementing if the Intranet homepage is to be made more usable for Library staff.

6 Appendix A: Survey Questions

* - Mandatory Questions

1. Would you like to see the following web links in the 'Quick Links' category which would appear on every page of the Staff Intranet? (Please select all the links you would like to see). *

Library Staff Directory

RSS Feeds

Library Tech Support

Library Newsletter

Documents you might want to read

Librarians' Forum

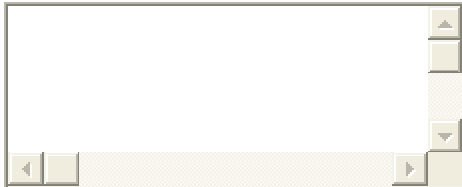
Meeting Rooms

2. Do you like the current '**Search**' and '**Advanced Search**' features in the Staff Intranet? *

Yes

No

3. Please share your views on what you don't like or would like to change about the '**Search**' and '**Advanced Search**' features

A rectangular text input field with a light beige background and a thin border. It contains several small, light-colored icons: a left-pointing arrow, a right-pointing arrow, and a vertical scroll bar on the right side.

4. Would you like to see the following web links in a footer that would appear at the bottom of every page of the Staff Intranet? (Please select all the links you would like to see). *

Desktop Support Services (DSS)(www.lib.umich.edu/lit/dss/)

Library Human Resources (www.lib.umich.edu/hr/)

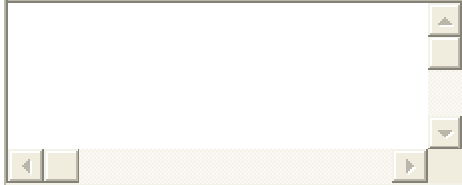
U-M Gateway (www.umich.edu)

Wolverine Access (www.wolverineaccess.umich.edu)

CTools (www.ctools.umich.edu)

Library Gateway (www.lib.umich.edu)

5. What kind of documents/content would you like to see in the ‘**Documents you might want to read**’ section? *

An empty text input field with a light beige background and a thin border. It features standard scrollbars on the right and bottom edges.

6. Do you like the label ‘**Documents you might want to read**’?

Yes

No

7. Which of the following labels would be a good replacement for the current label ‘Documents you might want to read’? *

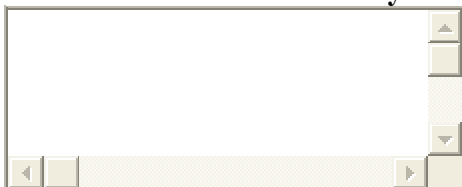
Documents of Interest

Hot Topics

Useful Documents & Reports

None of the above

8. If none of the labels in questions 6 and 7 seemed appropriate, can you suggest label to replace the current label ‘**Documents you might want to read**’?

An empty text input field with a light beige background and a thin border. It features standard scrollbars on the right and bottom edges.

9. Where would you expect to find the Usability Clearinghouse (www.lib.umich.edu/usability) in the Staff Intranet? *

Documents you might want to read

Footer

Quick Links

Not on the Staff Intranet at all, but linked from the Library Gateway (www.lib.umich.edu)

Other (Please Specify)

7 Appendix B: Recommended Categories for the Intranet Homepage

Departments and Committees

- Library Departments
- Library Committees
- Staff Directory
- Librarians' Forum

Policies & Procedures

- User Policies
- Library Gift Policy
- Communication Resources
- Grants Resources

Web Resources Management

- Web Development
- Usability in the Library
- Google Project Information

Training & Professional Development

- Training & Documentation
- Instructor College
- Workshop Registration

Quick Links

- Library Staff Directory
- RSS Feeds
- Library Tech Support
- Library Newsletter
- Documents you might want to read
- Librarians' Forum
- Related External Websites
- Meeting Rooms

Footer

- Desktop Support Services (www.lib.umich.edu/lit/dss/)
- Library Human Resources (www.lib.umich.edu/hr/)
- U-M Website Gateway (www.umich.edu)
- CTools (ctools.umich.edu)
- Wolverine Access (wolverineaccess.umich.edu)