SFX Label & Options Menu - Guerilla Test of SFX Label (round 1)

Reddy, Kavitha

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Project Cover Sheet

SFX Label & Options Menu

Guerilla Test of SFX Label (round 1)

SFX is a tool provided by the University Library that creates shortcuts to the full-text of online articles, as well as links to other Library services. When searching in many of the University Library databases, there will be an SFX button or link that connects to a menu of options.

Usability Working Group

Kat Hagedorn (chair), Suzanne Chapman, Karen Downing, Suzanne Gray, Anne Karle-Zenith, Shana Kimball, Jennifer Nardine, Gurpreet Rana, Robert Tolliver

Kavitha Reddy (student intern)

Report Author(s): Kavitha Reddy
Contact Information: ul-usability@umich.edu
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The goal for this test was to determine label terminology that best fits the user's understanding of the service in preparation of redesigning the button.

Method – Informal “Guerilla” User Tests
8 participants
Dates of study: July 2006

Results were inconclusive. Given 7 alternate label options to choose from, each received 1 vote (one received 2 votes).

Since the results of this test were inconclusive, this test should be revised and re-run. The SFX service should be explained in further detail and visual examples of alternate buttons labels in context will help the participants better visualize the new options.
Introduction
Since the current SFX button does not contain any language indicating its purpose, a new design will be made. A quick “guerilla” usability test was run in July 2006 as an experiment in informal testing and as a sort of “test of the test.” The goal of this test was to determine what terminology best fits users’ understanding of the SFX service.

Methodology
Participants were recruited on the 1st and 3rd floors of the Undergraduate Library and the 2nd floor of the Graduate Library. Of the 12 people approached, 8 agreed to participate, 3 declined, and 1 decided not to participate because he wasn't sure if he could stay long enough. The whole process took an hour and a half. See Appendix A for test script.

Results
Results of the test are somewhat inconclusive. For example, question 1b asks the participants to choose from a list of 7 terms. Each term received one vote (with one term receiving 2 votes) – this is hardly a consensus. The rest of the results were just as varied.

It seems there is still confusion about exactly what services the descriptions are referring to. In fact, the faculty member tested required clarification about both. The confusion may be partly due to the trouble many users have in understanding what databases/indexes are and how they work (for example, why PsycINFO would provide all of the information about an article except its content). Refining the descriptions and providing visual examples may help to provide much needed context. Another contributing factor may be the way the tests were conducted. While allowing the participants to read the descriptions helped, some seemed to feel pressure to complete the test quickly. Consequently, they may have just skimmed the descriptions without really understanding them.

Full results can be found in Appendix B.

Recommendations (for improving the test)
• Further clarify the descriptions for the services:
  o The Library has an online tool that provides links to the complete text of articles. For example, you are looking for some articles on a topic (let's say depression in children) and search in a library database (let's say PsycINFO) where you find an article you want. Some databases, including PsycINFO, only tell you that an article exists without providing the complete text. If the library has the content of that article online in some other location, this service will lead you to it. What would you call this tool?
  o We have a group of online services that you can use to:
    ▪ Have books, articles and other items sent from any one of the libraries at UofM to another of your choice
    ▪ Obtain items from another university's library
    ▪ Place a hold or ask for a recall on items that are currently checked out
• If that doesn't help, consider changing the test so that the questions asking them to come up with names are no longer separate. Instead, show them the lists immediately after they read the descriptions and then ask if they would choose from those options or come up with one of their own. As you can see, few participants were able to come up with names on their own. Even those that did, however, ultimately preferred one from the list. Moreover, several people became anxious at their inability to think of an answer. Finally, it seemed in some cases that seeing the list helped clarify what was being described.

• The issue of the way the tests are conducted is more difficult. Formally scheduling tests doesn't seem practical or worthwhile considering the project's time constraints and the length of the test. Just telling participants they can take their time might help. Another possibility is to post the questions as a survey. This would, of course, also provide more data to work with and hopefully more conclusive results. Unfortunately, the last survey showed that the respondents did not represent the University population very well. Specifically, no undergraduate students took the survey. The ideal solution may be to do a survey as well as guerilla testing to get feedback from users that would otherwise not be heard from.
Appendix A: Test script

(1) The Library has an online tool that provides links to the full text of articles. What would you call this online tool?
   (a) [Let them come up with a name for the service.]
   (b) How about this list? Of the names listed and your name, which do you think would be best?

   Find It
   Full Text
   Find Text
   Citation Linker
   Find It Now
   Availability at UMICH
   Online Full Text

c) In some cases, we use a small button with limited room for text to identify this tool. What short label or symbol would you use to identify a button that links to this service?

(2) We have a number of online services that you can use to request books, articles and other items from other libraries at UofM, from another institution's libraries, or items that are currently checked out. What would you call this group of services?

   (a) [Let them come up with a label.]
   (b) How about this list? Of the names listed and your name, which do you think would be best?

   Trip Saver
   Time Saver
   Get This
   Document Delivery/Interlibrary Loan
   Request This
   Place Request
   Order This
   Order It
   Get It
   Document Delivery

c) In some cases, we use a small button with limited room for text to identify this tool. What short label would you use to identify a button that links to this service?

(3) Do you think the two services we've described should be called the same thing? Or should they be kept separate?
## Appendix B: Test results

*Note: The results are ordered such that the user who seemed to have the best grasp of the concepts is listed first and the one who seemed the most uncertain is last.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who?</th>
<th>1a: Name tool</th>
<th>1b: Pick best tool name</th>
<th>1c: Button should have...</th>
<th>2a: Name services</th>
<th>2b: Pick best services name</th>
<th>2c: Button should have...</th>
<th>3: Combine?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male, 21 Undergrad</td>
<td>Quick Text or Find Text</td>
<td>“Find Text”. It has to have ‘text’ in it or it’ll be too general</td>
<td>Find text and an arrow cursor</td>
<td>Share Source</td>
<td>Time Saver. But I'm not sure it that's relevant to the 3rd bullet item</td>
<td>An image of a little clock with an arrow</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female, 30 Grad</td>
<td>Electronic Article</td>
<td>“Online” or “Full Text”</td>
<td>Article. It'll be good to remind me that it's an article I'm looking for rather than a book</td>
<td>Items + Item Status. The 3rd item seems different from the other 2.</td>
<td>Get This</td>
<td>Get This</td>
<td>No. It's important to keep the physical vs. online stuff distinct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male, 22 Recent alum</td>
<td>No comment</td>
<td>“Citation Linker”</td>
<td>CL and an arrow</td>
<td>No comment</td>
<td>Interlibrary Loan</td>
<td>ILL and an arrow image</td>
<td>No. Because one is for electronic and the other is for tangible items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male, 23 Incoming grad student</td>
<td>No comment</td>
<td>“Full Text” Document icon or Full Text</td>
<td>No comment (But he recognized that we were describing ILL)</td>
<td>Request This</td>
<td>Request This</td>
<td>Request This</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female, 40s Faculty</td>
<td>UM has it “Availibility at UM”</td>
<td>M symbol</td>
<td>“I use Mirlyn for 1 &amp; 3, and FirstSearch for the 2nd”</td>
<td>Trip Saver</td>
<td>Trip Saver or image of little feet</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female, 18 Undergrad</td>
<td>No comment</td>
<td>“Find It Now” Arrow with a page underneath</td>
<td>No comment</td>
<td>Document Delivery</td>
<td>Image of a book</td>
<td>No. The physical and online things should be kept separate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female, 18 Staff</td>
<td>No comment</td>
<td>“Find It”</td>
<td>Image of a magnifying glass</td>
<td>Document Delivery/Interlibrary Loan</td>
<td>Image of a package going into a mailbox</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male, 40s Alum</td>
<td>Info</td>
<td>Online Full Text Online Full Text #1</td>
<td>Time Saver</td>
<td>Time Saver</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>