Own the User Experience: Provide Discovery for Your Users

Varnum, Kenneth J.; Vacek, Rachel

http://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/139049
Own the User Experience: Provide Discovery for Your Users

Ken Varnum, Senior Program Manager
Rachel Vacek, Head of Design & Discovery
University of Michigan Library

LITA Forum - November 10, 2017
Overview

- Where we were (and are)
- Where we’re going
- Why
- How
- What’s next
- Questions to think about in your environment
What We Mean by “Discovery System”

- Index
- Interface
- Analytics
- API
What We Gave Ourselves

An organic set of discovery tools...

...with poor consistency...

...with different user experiences...

...that we now know has to go.
Current Discovery Interfaces: Mirlyn
Current Discovery Interfaces: MLibrary Search

Try our new beta search
See your results for history in our new beta search. Stay awhile and try out some other searches while you’re there!

Catalog (Mirlyn)

History
Author: Historical Association (Great Britain)
Published: 1912
Format: Journal

History
Author: Bower, Helen C.
Published: 1929
Format: Book

History
Author: Michigan Federation of Business and Professional Women’s Clubs.
Published: 1940
Format: Book

Databases

Primary Sources in U.S. History: Guides to Microforms
An index to numerous microfilm collections of primary documents on U.S. history.

History of Art Department, Visual Resources Collections
Includes over 70,000 digitized images selected from the UM History of Art’s collection of over 750,000 slides & photographs.

Shoah Foundation’s Visual History Archive (full access)
The Visual History Archive contains 52,000 digitized video interviews with holocaust survivors. Interviewees are

Research Help

Ask a Librarian

Talk to a Specialist about History
Loyd Gitari Mbabu
Librarian for African Studies and History
(734) 764-7289
Iimbabu@umich.edu

Research Guides

History 202: Doing History
PUBPOL495: Policy History for
Current Discovery Interfaces: ArticlesPlus

Try our new beta search
See your results for history in our new beta search. Stay awhile and try out some other searches while you're there!

Recommendation: We found some specialized collections that might help you …

- 17th-18th century Burney Collection newspapers
- Expanded academic ASAP

Your ArticlesPlus Search for 'history' found 66271465 results. Showing 1 - 20.

by  化学史研究会,  化学史研究会,  化学史学会編
Date: 1974
Format: Journal
Current Discovery Interfaces: Search Tools

Search Tools

Search Databases

Try our new beta search
See your results for history in our new beta search. Stay awhile and try out some other searches while you're there!

Search for databases matching
history

More search options

Problem accessing a database? See if it's a known problem at Library Outages or contact Ask a Librarian for assistance.

Showing database records 1 to 50 of 93.

1 2

Primary Sources in U.S. History: Guides to Microforms
An index to numerous microfilm collections of primary documents on U.S. history.
Database type: Catalog
Stable URI: http://www.lib.umich.edu/database/link/RR21
And now for something completely different.
A Demo is Worth 1000 Words
(or 150 well-chosen curses)

https://search.lib.umich.edu/
Timeline

2014

Winter: Shared proof of concept with library

2015

Fall: Conduct basic research

2016

Fall: Development work starts

2017

Winter: Staff beta launches
Fall: Public beta launches

2018

Summer: New search goes into production
Project Team

Ken Varnum
Project Management

Heidi Burkhardt
UX and Content Strategy

Ben Howell
UX and Accessibility

Rachel Vacek
Advocate, Cheerleader, Remover of Barriers, Mother of Dragons

Albert Bertram
Back-End Development

Jon Earley
Front-End Development and Accessibility

Bridget Burke
Front-End Development and Accessibility

Trevor Dobias
User Interface Design

@varnum  @vacekrae  @UMichLibrary
New Discovery Environment

Highlights

● Enables detailed usage information to contribute to library and learning analytics
● Better understanding of how our resources are used
● Improved ability to expose our resources and expertise with the campus
● Frees up instructional librarians to spend more time on information literacy and less on how to use the tool
● Accessibility and responsive design improve experience for all users
Roadmap -- Now to Launch (May 2018)

Features
- Work with search results
- Guide the user
- Alternate displays
- Favorites

UX Research
- Interfaces & interactions
- Mobile interface
- Accessibility
- Analytics
Roadmap -- Post-Launched

Features

- New books tool
- Additional sources
- Personalized bento box results
- Discovery of additional resources as well as relevant locations, services, and events tied to search results
- Allow for build-your-own bento box from anything we offer

...and ongoing UX research
Technical Specs

Tools
- Ruby
  - Rails
  - Blacklight *
- Front-end JavaScript
  - React
  - Pride **

APIs
- Summon
- Solr
- Custom APIs for Aleph holdings

Search application: https://github.com/mlibrary/search

* https://github.com/cul/clio-spectrum
** https://github.com/mlibrary/pride
How did we get here?
UX Research -- How we got started

● “Old” and new research
  ○ Reviewed user research from previous 4 years
  ○ Partnership with Deirdre Costello and EBSCO UX Team to conduct contextual inquiries
  ○ Conducted additional user testing on existing search interface
  ○ Analytics data and search logs

● Created tons of wireframes

● Conducted usability testing on new wireframes
Usability Testing

- Utilized task-based, guerilla, and contextual methods
  - Initially with paper and clickable prototypes, then on developed interfaces
  - Focused on specific feature sets and data stores
- Recruited from different user groups
  - Advanced, beginner
  - Students, faculty, staff
  - Student organizations
  - Allies across campus
- Subject experts helped identify participants
- Used candy, gift cards, and swag as incentives
- Student interns helped run tests and analyze results
UX Successes

● Iterative process
  ○ Put prototypes in front of stakeholders and users more quickly to inform design changes
  ○ Set up feedback mechanisms for library staff to provide feedback

● Relationships
  ○ Improved credibility with other library staff by including them in usability tests and sharing results frequently
  ○ Shared understanding on project team
  ○ Recruited repeat participants for different studies - they ♥ libraries
Questions to Think About
In YOUR environment

What... is the air-speed velocity of an unladen swallow?
Politics & Governance

● Spoiler alert: Everyone has an interest in discovery

● Library created a project “steering team” with about a dozen members from across the library

● The active “project team” is part of the steering team, but is the group of us that is doing the research & development
Communication

- Alpha “road show” -- met with roughly 50% of library staff to explain approach & build support
- Regular all-staff emails about progress
- Frequent solicitations for feedback
- Campus communication
  - Links on current search tools
  - Campus daily news (week of 11/6)
Resources (people)

It has taken us a lot of FTE over the past 9 months!

- 2 front-end developers
- 1 back-end developer
- 1 designer
- 1 user experience researcher
- 1 content expert
- 1 project manager

These people weren’t as free to take on many other projects.
Resources (tools, etc.)

- Confluence
- JIRA Service Desk
- JIRA Software
- GitHub
- InVision
- Slack
“You can use an eraser on the drafting table or a sledgehammer on the construction site.”

- Frank Lloyd Wright
Questions?

Ken Varnum  
Senior Program Manager  
varnum@umich.edu

Rachel Vacek  
Head of Design & Discovery  
rvacek@umich.edu

University of Michigan Library GitHub site  
https://github.com/mlibrary