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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The SG program was meant to facilitate more efficient information access for the purpose of research and learning among OSU library users. The SG evaluation request to determine user-perceptions and expectations prior to product launch was made in August, 2011. The results of the formative evaluation were meant to inform program improvement while gradually implementing the program.

A convenient sample of 33 participants was selected from a total population of 26,764 students, faculty and staff of the OSU Stillwater campus. In addition, 18 SGs (representing about 10% of the total 168 SGs) were randomly selected for evaluation. Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected using survey questionnaires, personal interviews, essays and a web evaluation rubric. Data was collected in order to answer the following four evaluation questions:

1. What are the library users' perceptions towards new SGs as tools for accessing information?
2. What are the library users' expectations of the new SGs?
3. Is there significant discrepancy between SG user-perceptions and expectations?
4. Do the new SGs meet web design guidelines?

Findings

All the 11 respondents who narrated their experiences of SG-use reported that they found them useful and also highly approved of them. Respondents had mostly positive perceptions regarding SGs with 65% to 82% of them in favor. Suggestions for improvement on aspects of the sampled SGs were made by between 16% and 37% of respondents, constituting a minority. When the web evaluation rubric was used, 75% of the SGs attained scores of between 12 and 16, out of a possible 16 points indicating that these SGs *met* web design standards. Two of these SGs had scores between 14 and 16 and were rated *above standard*. Two SGs had scores in the range 8-11 showing they were *developing*.

Respondents found SGs easily accessible, easy to use and with acceptable content densities. Fifty percent of the respondents preferred the new SGs to the familiar basic BOSS-search. When taken together with input from the personal interviews with two SG creators, it seems credible that the availability of more efficient and better quality content that is tailored to user needs helped to narrow the differences between user-perceptions and expectations.

Evaluation judgments

From the evidence gathered, the evaluator was of the opinion that suggested improvements and noted discrepancies did not constitute a serious divide between user-perceptions and expectations. The OSU library was well able to address the participants' concerns easily. The respondents were enthusiastic about the new SGs which they found very useful. The judgment reached by the evaluator was to continue the SG program.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were proposed for implantation:

1. Quick action could be taken to create SGs for all those subjects that were not part of the 168 SGs. Respondents expressed the fact that their struggles could be less with SGs.

2. All SGs were required to list top journals whether or not they added up to ten. It was noted that no SG mentioned their top 5 or top 3 journals; if they did not mention the top 10, nothing was mentioned instead

3. All blank destination pages of a SG could be de-listed until such time when content for the page becomes available. Navigating to empty pages of a SG amounted to a waste of time.

4. Pictorial demonstrations could be used in a SG if the accompanying text was clear. All those demos that had illegible text could be removed or improved sufficiently.

5. Alphabetical organization of content was adhered to in most SGs sampled except in two.

Together with several other typographical and other errors, regular proof reading and editing of SGs was recommended.

NEW SUBJECT GUIDES: AN EVALUATION REPORT OF USER-PERCEPTIONS, EXPECTATIONS AND SATISFACTION

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction and Background to the Evaluation

Description of the Evaluand

The Oklahoma State University (OSU) library provides directions to users on how to find the information they need on a self-service basis. Library users find information in books, government documents, journal articles, theses and dissertations, in addition to the world-wide web resources. Most of the information is organized in data bases in order to make its access more efficient since the library subscribes to many sources from around the world.

Various formats of organizing the data bases are in use. With increasing information, data base organization by discipline and alphabet even with basic and advanced search options is not enough. Hence the OSU library, like many others, has been working on improving their organization and accessibility of information. Since the library has most information in digitized form, organization and access via the web is the current practice.

The OSU library staff developed the new subject guides (SGs) to improve access and presentation of information that is currently available. Based on the evolving environment and users' needs, they continue to pursue innovations, ever seeking to improve in order to stay ahead in the industry. Therefore, the results of this evaluation ought to form the basis for further innovation in a continuous cycle of implement-evaluate-upgrade.

The new subject guides are meant to be research assistants to users, they provide web searches in general and multi-disciplinary data bases, full text journals browse-able by title, subject guides with departmental web page guides giving many features, options and details down to the top-ten-journals of the discipline. They are designed to facilitate efficient and successful searches for information needed by library users.

Description of key stakeholders

Stakeholders are individuals or groups that have an interest in the program to be evaluated or in the results of the evaluation (Fitzpatrick, Sanders & Worthen, 2004). With regard to the new OSU subject guides, key stake holders include:

The client: Roy Degler (the Reference Librarian, OSU Digital Library Services) is the individual who requested the evaluation. In this particular evaluation, he was also the sponsor and agent who authorized the evaluation and is responsible for all the resources required for its conduct. As the client, Roy constituted the main audience because he received the evaluation report.

Other audiences: The ten librarians involved in the development of new subject guides from each college, the course instructor (AGED 6223, Dr Kathleen Kelsey) and all other OSU library users including the various categories of students and faculty at Stillwater and the satellite campuses, colleagues to Roy Degler and other library staff as well as community members.

Victims: This evaluation had no immediate victims.

Beneficiaries: The beneficiaries of the program were all the library users (students, staff and the community).

Need for the program

The overall purpose of the evaluation was to establish user-perceptions and expectations with respect to the new SGs. The evaluation explored whether the use of the new SGs had narrowed the difference between user-perceptions and expectations. This focus was based on the client's desire to gauge whether there was any perceived value-addition to the efforts applied to creating the new SGs. The prevalent user-dispositions towards the utility of the new SGs was required as a self-check prior to charting the next course.

This user need(s) did not derive from neither known complaints nor demands by any other authority made known to the evaluator. The evaluator took these information needs by the client to be routine and as normal steps in the way the Digital Library Section worked.

Evaluand program objectives

The evaluand (SG) program was meant to facilitate more efficient information access for the purpose of research and learning among OSU library users. The OSU library staff developed the new subject guides (SGs) to improve access and presentation of information

that was available. In pursuit of this overall objective, the evaluator sought to establish prevailing respondent-perceptions and expectations towards the new SGs.

Evaluator collaboration with some stakeholders

Two groups of stakeholders that the evaluator found useful during the evaluation were the undergraduate students and the librarians who were involved in putting together selected SGs. Undergraduate students (N = 16,814) comprised 78% of the total OSU student enrollment

during the fall semester, 2011 (Oklahoma State University, 2011a). Because they were the principal users of library facilities, their perceptions and expectations as the majority were of interest to the client. If for any reason the product didn't work for them or was harmful, they would constitute the group with the most victims.

The librarians who compiled the SGs were hands-on individuals whose understanding of the program the evaluator did not wish to miss. Also, some of them had conducted online surveys regarding how their SGs were being used and the feedback they already had was of interest to the evaluator.

Constraints and barriers to the evaluation

One of the constraints that the evaluator faced was limited time. As a result, data could not be collected from as large sample using the same procedures that were employed. In addition, the evaluator would have preferred to use observation as a method for data collection but this was not possible on account of limited time on the part of the evaluator who also was a student. Time was not enough to work through all the required steps to get IRB approval for a much better study. During data collection, some of the key respondents could not find the time to make appointments with the evaluator. This became more pronounced as the semester progressed because the evaluator and the potential respondents became busier due to the pressure of other work.

With sufficient money, the evaluation could have surveyed library users at OSU-Tulsa and other satellite campuses so as to get greater input from more participants. Though not available, had token rewards been used as incentives to motivate participants, the response could have been higher.

Randomization was not used to select the participants for the evaluation. Instead intact groups and convenience samples were used. This is a weakness that could have been overcome to improve internal validity of the data collected.

CHAPTER TWO

Evaluation procedures

Evaluation questions

The new SGs were made available at different times during the fall semester, 2011. The process was considered on-going most of the semester with some disciplines not having any SGs until later on. Since the product was not marketed, a big number of library users did not know about their existence by the time of commencement of this evaluation in early September, 2011. Awareness was therefore not the big concern of this evaluation as their introduction was considered to be a form of piloting. The following questions guided the evaluation:

1. What are the library users' perceptions towards new SGs as web tools for information Access?
2. What are the library users' expectations of new SGs as websites?
3. Is there significant discrepancy between SG-user-perceptions and expectations?
4. To what extent do the SGs meet web design standards?

Methodology

The evaluation focus on two targets the subject guides and the population of users, students, faculty and staff.

Subject Guides

In terms of subject guides there are 168 subject guides that had the following distribution:

Table1. Number of subject guides by college

College	Number of subject guides
Agriculture	10
Arts & Sciences	30
Business	8
Education	53
Engineering & Architecture	4
Human Sciences	5
Library Information	15
Sciences	23
Social Sciences	13
Veterinary Medicine	7
Total	168

SGs sample

A stratified random sample was extracted from the 168 subject guides. Ten percent of the guides from each college were used, making a total sample size of 18 guides that was examined. Stratified sampling is often used to ensure the proportional representation of each stratum (Henry, 1990). In this case each college was considered a stratum.

Target population

The target population included students, faculty and OSU non-teaching staff. The population of interest was students, faculty and staff that access the OSU library in Stillwater, Oklahoma. The big segment of the survey population ($N = 26,764$) was made up of 21,419 students, 78.5% undergraduate and 20.1% graduate (Oklahoma State University, 2011a). The number of faculty (professor/lecturers) is 927 while the number of graduate teaching assistants was 457 for the Stillwater campus (Oklahoma State University, 2010b). Similarly, the number of the non-teaching staff was 3,961 according to the OSU Diversity Ledger records of 2010 (Oklahoma State University, 2011c).

Target population sample

From the target population considering the size of the population and the constraints of time a convenience sample was used to apply a survey questionnaire (Appendix A). According to Henry (1990) a convenience sample is a group of individuals who are readily available to participate in a study. This sample comprised 20 individuals 17 undergraduate students, two graduate students and a faculty member. Additional qualitative information was obtained from 10 graduate students, who answer an open question on an online class about their opinion of the guides (Appendix E); one undergraduate student, who voluntarily described the process of using

the guides as a complement of the survey form (Appendix E), and two librarians that work on the guides' development that answer to the structured interview (Appendix C, D).

Data collection

Data collection instruments for the SGs

As a consumer-oriented product evaluation a key step is determining the criteria to be used (Fitzpatrick, Sanders and Worthen, 2011). The second step requires the establishment of standards for the criteria followed by the measurement of the product against the criteria based on standards. The last step involves the synthesis of results to determine the products quality (Ibid).

The evaluators used rubrics for best practices on web design as well as input from the literature to generate a rubric according to the evaluation goals. The rubrics that were used had a rating scale that was adopted as the standard against which specific attributes of the SGs were scored (Cameron, 2004; Krug, 2011).

Data collection procedures for the SGs

The rubric is a means of communicating expectations that provides focused feedback on a certain topic, using a list of criteria and describing different levels of quality. The rubric used by the evaluators is an adaptation from the web design rubric (2004).

The rubric was modified according to the goals of the evaluation and following criteria suggested in the literature. The variables measured with the rubric were:

- **Communication:** In terms of Web design, refers to an approach to express something in a complete and efficient way.

- Utility: Good websites are well organized. Their content is presented in a clear manner that it is easy to follow. Readers can get around the Web site with ease. Blocks of text and images must be of appropriate size.
- Engagement: The users for whom the site was designed will be actually engaged with it, benefit from it, and plan to return regularly.
- Visual appeal: Each page must be predictable and look similar to each of the other pages in color, text, format, and/or layout.

Each variable had a maximum score of 4 points, where a score of 1 is beginning, 2 is developing, 3 meets the standard and 4 is above standard. Each point has its own definition (see Appendix B).

Each guide has a maximum score of 16 points.

Each evaluator analyzed nine guides following the rubric.

Data Collection Instruments for the target population sample

To collect data from the sample three different methods were used: a survey, narratives answering an open question and structured interview.

The survey form (see Appendix A) was developed according to the variables implied in the evaluation questions, supported by the literature review.

The narratives were generated after the open question: “after retrieving the SG, what did you find most helpful and most frustrating?” (See Appendix E)

The structured interview consisted of four open questions addressed to guides developers (See Appendix D)

Data collection procedures for the target population sample

Survey data collection

After presenting the SGs to an undergraduate face to face class, the instructor asked the class to complete an assignment. It consisted in a brief literature review, and the use of the SGs was suggested for the literature search. After the assignment the students were given the survey form. From a class of twenty students seventeen answered the survey. The forms were also given to a graduate class there were three responses two graduate students and a faculty member.

Narratives of the open questions from the online class AGED 6100 were provided by Dr. Kelsey.

Ten graduate students answer the question. One extra narrative was obtained from the face to face class, from a student who added a description to her search process with the survey form.

Two librarians that are developing the SGs were interviewed following the structured interview, one interviewed was summarized, and the other was completely transcribed.

Table 2 shows how the participants in the sample were distributed.

Table 2. Number of participants by data collection procedure

Participants	Survey questionnaire			Personal interview	Narrative		Total
	Undergrad. students	Grad. students	Faculty	Librarians	Grad. students	Undergrad. student	
	17	2	1	2	10	1	33

Data analysis

The evaluation process drew upon mixed methods to better answer the evaluation questions; both qualitative and quantitative methods were used.

Data analysis of the SGs

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze appraisal of the SGs following the rubric.

Data analysis of the target population sample

A quantitative approach was used in the survey to describe the users' perceptions and expectations from the SGs.

The qualitative approach was used in the analysis of the interviews with the librarians, the on line students opinion, and the student narrative over the process. Content analysis was used to analyze the interview, the on line open question and the narrative.

Criteria and standards for making evaluation judgments

According to Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen (2011), criteria are the factors that are considered important to judge something. Standards are the level of performance expected on each criterion. See table 3.

CHAPTER THREE

Findings

Findings are presented in order of the research questions and with regard to the various methods used for data collection. Table 3 shows the demographics of the participants:

Table 3 . Frequency and percentage of the participants' demographics

	Survey		Narrative		Interview		Rubric	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
freshman	1	5.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
sophomore	4	20.0	1	9	0	0	0	0
junior	6	30.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
senior	6	30.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
graduate	2	10.0	10	91	0	0	*2	100
faculty	1	5.0	0	0	2	100	0	0
Total	20		11		2		2	

*Evaluators

Evaluation Question 1: What are the library users' perceptions towards new SGs as web tools for information access?

The data obtained from the survey showed that the perception about the SGs is positive table 4 shows the highest percentages by variable regarding perceptions:

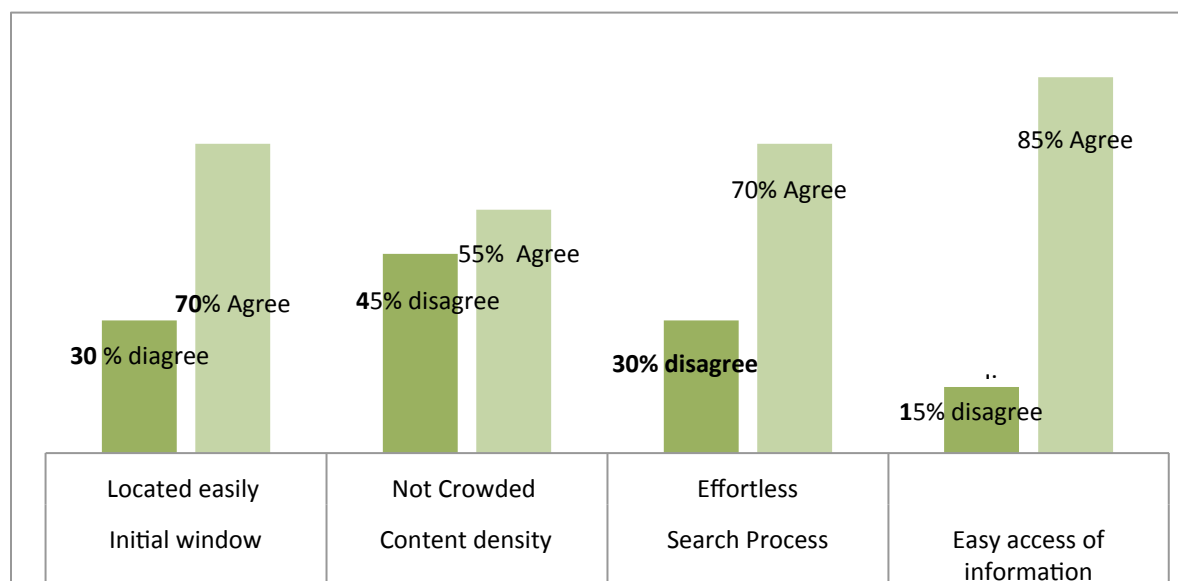


Fig. 1 Perceptions by criteria

Findings are presented in order of the research questions and with regard to the various methods used for data collection.

This is consistent with qualitative findings, all of the graduate students that answered the on line question find the guides helpful. Some of the participants in this group find the access a little bit difficult, and some mention a crowded screen. Overall the view is positive, with some weak points regarding the design and the search process. From the open question: After reviewing the Subject Guides, what did you find most helpful and most frustrating? asked in a graduate on line class. From 10 different respondents, all respondents found the SGs useful, some of them added that it was easy to find top journals and full text, and remarked that it was a great resource for on line students. One praised the key word search and another stated that it would be useful to have a thesaurus to use it.

After working with the SGs an undergraduate student states she found many helpful articles and an online book; what was frustrating for her was the fact that she could not open some of the articles, because they were unavailable in the site.

Evaluation Question 2: What are the library users' expectations of new SGs as websites?

Table 4. Expectations by criteria

Variable	Perception	Relative Frequency	Percentage
Need of improvement	Yes	14/20	70 %
Suggested improvements	Faster searches	3/19	16 %
	Simplifying procedure	7/19	37 %
	More subject choices		
	Better filters	4/19	21%
	Less steps to find an article		
	Simplifying the procedure and less cluttering	5/19	26 %
Comparison with BOSS	Boss is better	3/19	16 %
	Not different	5/19	26 %
	Guides are slightly better	8/19	42 %
	Guides are much better	3/19	16 %

Most of the participants in the survey were affirmative about the need of improvement, simplifying the procedure and enabling faster searches were underlined as the main only

features by 37% and 16% respectively. More subject choices, better filters and fewer steps to find an article were mentioned together, by 21% of the participants; simplifying the procedure and less clutter in the site were mentioned together by 26%. Comparing the SGs with the BOSS 42% found the SGs slightly better. According to the results the goal of providing information is reached and most of the uncovered expectations refer to process and design.

Evaluation Question 3: Is there significant discrepancy between SG-user-perceptions and expectations?

The structured interviews with the librarians show agreement on the main points, the goal for both of the interviewed librarians, is to show the students how to find useful, up to date, information. Both base their content selection in the user's needs. Utility is based on provide another way to reach the students, and help them find information; the main expectation is to reach the goal. Considering that the OSU library staff developed the subject guides to improve delivery and presentation of information and considering that the product is under development there is not a significant discrepancy between perceptions and expectations.

Evaluation question 4. Do the SGs meet the standards proposed by the evaluators in the rubric?

The evaluators' analysis of the 18 SGs that constituted the sample following the rubric (Appendix B), showed that in the four categories described, communication, utility, engagement and visual appeal both the 25th and 50th percentiles reach the value 12 that suggest that overall the guides meet the standards. The 75th percentile reaches the maximum value of 16, above standard. Over a total of 16 points, the criteria were: 0 - 8 Needs improvement; 8 - 11 Developing; 11 – 14 Meets Standard and 14 – 16 Above Standard, see Figure 1.

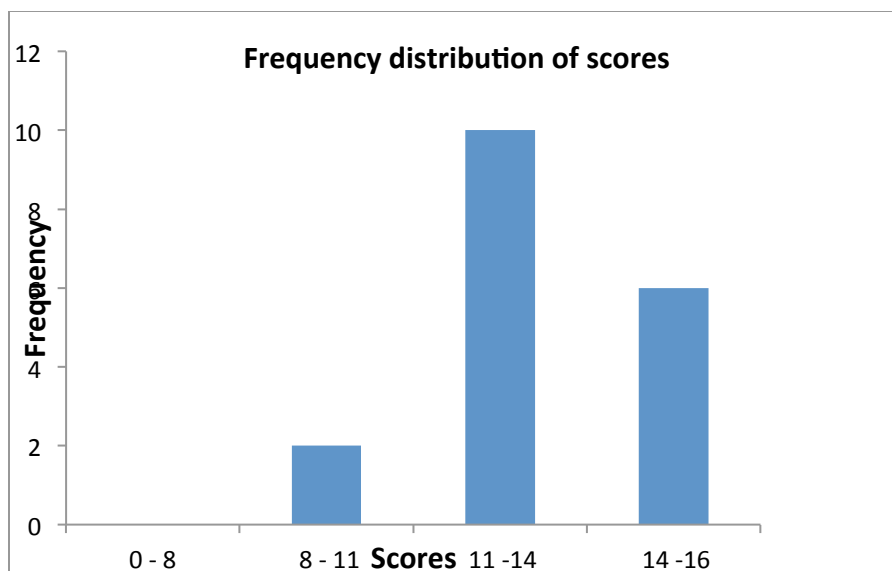


Fig. 2 Frequency distribution of scores

Table 5. Frequency and percentage by rubric criteria

Rubric scores	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
0 – 8 Needs Improvement	0	0.0	0.0
8 – 11 Developing	2	11.1	11.1
11 -14 Meets standards	10	55.6	66.7
14 -16 Above Standards	6	33.3	100.0
Total	18		

The results show that regarding the categories 75% of the guides meet the standards or are above them.

Table 6. Noted discrepancies

Nature of finding	Frequency	Concern
Locating and accessing SGs from the library home page	Common to all SGs	Lack of instructions and directions to guide a prospective user. Icon appears and disappears.
Consistency in fonts, use of hot links and statements of purpose of particular SGs	Most SGs met this requirement	Consistency is a good practice. Serious variability in some cases in the sizes of SG pages with some taking a quarter a page while others took 6 pages.
The page with “Top 10 journals” in most SGs	Not all the guides have this feature	Some orange field had repeated titles e.g. “Google scholar” appearing twice, “Top 10 journals” appearing 4 times in the same window. Crowding in some pages with up to 16 such fields where 7 to 8 was the average.
Pictorial demonstrations of how to conduct article and book searches	Fairly frequent	Most of the text instructions and directions that accompany these demonstrations are illegible
Types and typing	Not so frequent	Cases of two connected words which should be separate; also the case of a page whose text spilled over to the right side of the window and could not be fully accessed
Organization of content	Rare	Most SGs had content organized in alphabetical order and so easy to locate. Lack of alphabetical organization of content was encountered

Evaluative Judgments

This evaluation followed a formative approach in order to improve the product, the subject guides. According to our findings the product is good, to certain extent it covers the expectations of the users and developers, but it needs improvement. Most of the individuals in the sample suggested improvements, and the most required was simplifying the procedures and reducing the clutter (See Figure 3).

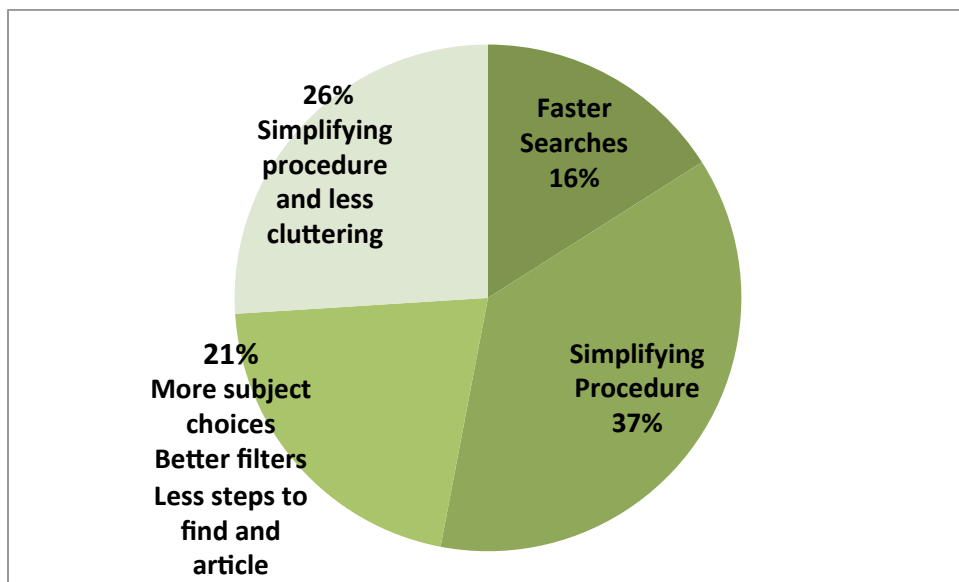


Fig. 3 Percentage of suggested improvements

Based on all the evidence presented in this evaluation process we can conclude that there are no major discrepancies between users' perceptions and expectations.

Recommendations

The evaluators suggest the following improvements:

- A brief guide to access could be included. The icon should be persistent.
- Design should consistent
- The Top Journals are an important feature for all guides that should be emphasize
- Regular proof reading
- Alphabetical organization
- Add a thesaurus that can help in word searches
- Avoid including pages without content
- When including pictures consider that accompanying text is readable
- The product is ready to be launched

Evaluators' reflections

After this process of evaluation and in deep observation of the guides, my personal perception is that the SGs are an excellent tool. As a tool and mostly as a technological tool, it faces the challenge of constant upgrading and reviewing. It turns into an essential part of the virtual world of learning and teaching, if there is a virtual classroom there must be a virtual library. Technology is an unavoidable part of today's literacy, and it is sometimes a controversial tool in the classroom, so it is up to those who adapt technology to education to take challenges like the subject guides. Virginia Gravina

As opposed to the “hard” library resources such as books, videos and films which a library can hold a limited number of, digitized resources are millions of times bigger and navigating through them to reach desired information can be frustrating without some guide. My personal view is that SGs are necessary and useful even in their current form. Library users are a lot better off than without them. They help save time; they are very useful in situations where students take courses that are without a course book. Users who visit the same SGs may derive different perspectives on an issue and this helps to enrich classroom discussions with their professors. Subject guides could help students cover more material in any given course.

I value the SGs evaluated firstly for their utility in yielding fruitful searches relatively quickly. The stylistics of a SG such as visual appeal are secondary to availability of useful materials. I concur with many respondents who found the SGs useful. Even if there are intentions to target smaller groups (say individual course units via SGs), accessing knowledge for self improvement and learning should be encouraged through developing current SGs. After all, the trend in learning is towards inter-disciplinary direction. Very specialized SGs will serve only very few library users. SGs are a great innovation. Keep it up. Matofari Fred

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Appendix A

Subject Guide Use

freshman	sophomore	junior	senior	
Major :				

After working with the subject guides as suggested by your instructor, complete the following questionnaire:

1. What is your impression of the initial window where you find the **New Guides'** icon on the OSU library web site?

Check one:

I located it easily _____

I needed help to locate it _____

2. In the **instructions window** of the subject guide that you have used, which of the following describes the content density of the window?

Check one:

Not crowded _____

Crowded _____

Very crowded _____

3. From your experience of accessing information using subject guides, the process can be described as:

Check one:

Effortless _____

Hard _____

Very hard _____

4. Subject Guides have been organized to make it easy for users to access information. Do you:

Check one:

Strongly disagree _____

Disagree _____

Agree _____

Strongly agree _____

5. Do you think the new OSU Library subject guides can be improved?

Check one:

Yes __

No ____

Don't know ____

6. Which of the following improvements in the new OSU library subject guides would you suggest?

Mark ALL that apply

Enabling faster searches __

Simplifying the searching procedure ____

Other (mention) _____

7. If you compare the new OSU library subject guides with the usual (BOSS) search, are you of the view:

Check one:

That the BOSS searches are better ___

That the two are not different ___

That the new OSU library subject guides are slightly better ___

That the new OSU library subject guides are much better ___

8. Have you used the new OSU library subject guides **before**?

Check one:

Yes ___

No ___

If your answer to question 8 is yes, answer the remaining questions:

9. How often do you access the new OSU Library subject guides?

Check one:

Sometimes ___

Often ___

Very Often ___

Regularly ___

10. When searching with the help of the subject guides, do you find what you are looking for :

Check one:

Sometimes ___

Often ___

Very Often ___

Regularly ___

Any questions that you might have please feel free to contact at my e-mail address.

Appendix B

SUBJECT GUIDES : WEB DESIGN EVALUATION RUBRIC

	BEGINNING 1 POINT	DEVELOPING 2 POINTS	MEET STANDARD 3 POINTS	ABOVE STANDARD 4 POINTS	SCORE
1. Communication					
In terms of Web design, refers to an approach to express something in a complete and efficient way.	*Web page is too busy * reading it I cannot find what I want quickly.	*Web page is somewhat busy *reading it I have difficulty finding what I want quickly.	*content is simple and to the point *appealing graphic elements are included appropriately *differences in type size and /or color are used well	*content is simple and to the point *design is easy to understand and follow	
2. Utility Good websites are well organized. Their content is presented in a clear manner that it is easy to follow. Readers can get around the Web site with ease. Blocks of text and images must be of appropriate size.	*content is confusing and difficult to follow *site is difficult to navigate *not intuitive *text and images do not have appropriate size	* content is somewhat confusing and difficult to follow *site is somewhat difficult to navigate * too much text information	*content is presented in a clear manner *navigation is not very easy	*content is presented in a clear manner that is easy to follow *navigation is easy	
3. Engagement					
The users for whom the site	*the site does not meet my	*the site meet some my needs	*the site meet my needs of	*the site has plenty of	

was designed will be actually engaged with it, benefit from it, and plan to return regularly.	needs of information *there is no interaction	of information * interaction is not very clear	information * interaction is appropriate	information *interaction is easy	
4. Visual Appeal					
Each page must be predictable and look similar to each of the other pages in color, text, format, and/or layout	*pages seem unrelated	*background, text format and color usage are randomly chosen with few consistent elements	*background, text format and color usage are somewhat consistent with little variation	*background, text format and color usage are carefully chosen to produce a consistent screen layout for all pages	
					SCORE ____/ 16

0 - 8 Needs improvement

8 - 11 Developing

11 – 14 Meets Standard

14 – 16 Above Standard

<http://piotech.wsd.wednet.edu/techoneunits/3webpagedesign/worksheets/webpagerubric.pdf>

Appendix C

NEW OSU LIBRARY SUBJECT GUIDES: A FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF THEIR EFFECTIVENESS IN TERMS OF WEB DESIGN FEATURES, CONTENTS AND PERFORMANCE.

Structured Interview

Name: _____ Position: _____

- 1) What is your main goal in developing a guide?
- 2) How do you select the content?
- 3) What features in your opinion make this new development useful?
- 4) What are your expectations about the product?
- 5) Have you got any feedback from the users? What did they say about it?

APPENDIX D: TRANSCRIBED STRUCTURED PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

Conducted with *Respondent Number 1* on Tuesday, Nov. 22nd 2011 at the main library. The following summary was written following the personal interview with one of several librarians in-charge of subject guides by colleges.

1. What is your main goal in developing a guide?

The main purpose is to provide up-to-date information to graduate students and faculty for selected disciplines or subject areas. A subject guide is a tool that helps to direct a user to certain particular content in a discipline. Development of subject guides is an on-going process that depends on received new information such as new books, e-books, information from publishers, other published resources and any noteworthy pieces of information.

2. How do you select the content?

This is done by sifting through materials available at the library and other sources and by consulting graduate students, faculty and departments to know their needs. The subject guides should be geared towards meeting the users' needs and so their input is very important.

Therefore subject guides are built around essential materials for the particular discipline such as the encyclopedia for physics, data bases for chemistry and specific publications for engineering. The pages of a subject guide also will include departmental logos, OSU colors and other library features.

3. What features in your opinion make this new development useful?

Librarians aim to make sites (pages of subject guide) interesting by including space for departmental contributions and suggestions. Whatever is included on the site is done

consultatively and it amounts to small-scale advertizing of the program with the help of students and faculty using the web pages of specific subject guides.

4. What are the expectations about the product?

Right now, the product seems fine. However, features often require updating whenever the need arises. Most updates or extensive updates are usually made before the start of the academic semesters and that was why, most subject guides were last updated in August, 2011.

5. Have you gotten feedback from the users? What did they say about it?

The physics and chemistry departments use them and they kind of like them

Conducted with *Respondent Number 2* on Friday, Nov. 17th 2011 at the main library.

The following summary was transcribed from the tape recording of the personal interview with one of several librarians in-charge of subject guides by colleges.

1. What is your main goal in developing a guide?

Main goal to find good information on a subject in library jargon we called path finders for decades librarian make guides to help people find stuff, 25 years ago they were sheets of paper, for example public libraries put up together information that students asked very often.

Libguides are basically web 2.0 tools to help us recreate path-finders for the new generation; hopefully they are telling the students what their options to find information are. We try to point them to stuff into the OSU library whether it is physical books, whether is data bases whether is subject librarians whether is a way for them hopefully to find good information. We know as librarians that left at their own device students will find good stuff, and that will probably work some of the time, sometimes good enough so students keep doing that, but we want to show them in libguides this is stuff that you guys pay for, this is stuff that is much different than just go and search on Google or Wikipedia. This is quality research, quality information.

2. How do you select the content?

They way I approach my libguides, and if you ask my colleague she will give you a different answer I try to sit my library website into my organization because people will access in different ways, and I can get lost looking for stuff in a website, there is so much stuff there, what I try to do is tackle from the point of view of being a student having to write a paper or collect

information what kinds of things might I need and that drives how I create that guide, so you will see sections on background information which stand in all my guides. Background information is basically places students can go to get a definition. They are reading an article they come across a word that they didn't know what it is here is a link to print encyclopedias, on line books, on line dictionaries, print dictionaries whatever they want to use, they can go and get a definition. There is a link to finding books they are going to need, there five ways to find books. There is a link to dissertations, there is a link for articles and there are several sub categories below that particular kinds of articles, there is a tab for citing and writing, if they have to write a paper here is help to cite their stuff and write the paper. I try to get things together that are like my way, similar of thinking, so when you look at how to find a book for example, or articles, let's say if you look how to find articles there is going to be three pages there, subpages one will state the basis primary, secondary and multidisciplinary, there is going to be a box on how to do an interlibrary loan. If you cannot find full text interlibrary loan can help you. There is a link in how to do document delivery; we can scan articles for you if you ask for. There is a box on how to find full text, there is a box on combining terms together with burning operators, just try give examples to students that there is help there. In case of data basis I put some youtube videos for psych info that I came across to help students, if they are not going to come to the library, there is a video that they can watch on their time and it might help them. That is the way I try to approach, bringing as much stuff together in one place they don't have to look to find it.

3. What features in your opinion make this new development useful?

Students will take the path with less resistance on every opportunity; I suspect I probably would have done the same thing 30 years ago when I was in college. We as librarians see the result of that everyday almost, students come to the library for help, they come to the reference desk, and

sometimes they did not even come to the reference desk, and that is one of the reasons the libguides are there too, they are another way to reach students. You have students that come to the library to ask for help, but you have a large segment that will never come to the library and if they do they will never ask for help, so it is another way to try get them some help in a way that might be more comfortable or approachable to them.

4. What are the expectations about the product?

Help students find information that is ultimately why I am doing this, if I can help a student find a journal article that was worth it. I know how students will contact me, some will come in, some will e-mail, and some will text us this is just another way to reach out the students.

5. Have you gotten feedback from the users? What did they say about it?

Feedback comes from two different sources from people that is anonymous, but when people give me a contact information is another way for me to respond to that and know how I can help if they could not find what they were looking for.

APPENDIX E: PARTICIPANTS' NARRATIVE RESPONSES

Eleven members of the AGED 6100 class “Developments in Agriculture & Extension Education” were introduced to subject guides by their instructor, Dr. Kelsey. After reviewing several subject guides, they were asked to state *what they found most helpful and most frustrating about the guides*. Their views are reproduced below.

1. I did find this site helpful. I appreciate that the top journals for Ag education majors are easy to find. I was having a difficult time finding full-text articles on some of the other sites but was able to find several pertinent full-text articles through the libguides. I did have difficulty logging in once I had selected an article. It took several tries before the site accepted my user name and password. Overall, this is a site I will be using.
2. I also found this site helpful. I didn't have any trouble logging in. It seemed like a lot of information all in one place, so it is definitely something I will be visiting again and again. I was able to get Access to more articles in several places without knowing what specific journals I wanted to search. Overall, thumbs up.
3. Most helpful: Lots of good info in one search. Found a great article that was not in any of the journals. So excited! Most frustrating: Had a hard time logging in.
4. Yes, I as well found this helpful. The most helpful is that everything is broken down on the left side of the column bar and you can search independently for certain key words. If I had to choose the most frustrating part...it would be, it seems a little disorganized... or better worded, not very pleasing to the eye when I first opened the page. I felt a little overwhelmed by the amount of links at the top.
5. I have found the site to be helpful so far. As I do more research, I am sure I will find minor suggestions for improvement.

6. I think this website is great. As a distant student I often feel we are at a disadvantage when it comes to library resources. I like how this website has so many databases in one place for us to use. As someone who never had to use anything like this in completing my BS this will be very helpful to me. Thanks for introducing this site to us.
7. Overall, I believe that this site will be a wonderful resource to all of us. I do however agree that it is a bit overwhelming when you first open the site. Also, I wish that it had a thesaurus on it, like ProQuest so that if we don't think of the best Word to put into the search engine, it could give us other options that might be better.
8. This is extremely helpful! It incorporates many resources that focus on the topics that we will be researching for this department.
9. This site will be very helpful for me! Not only am I just getting back to school, but I am taking two online courses which is a whole new ballgame for me! I hope to utilize this service a great deal when completing my work.
10. Maybe you all knew this....You can email the research to yourself in the Libguide thing. I had found a paper then couldn't find it again, called Lynne and she helped me find it. You have to save it to the folder but then do something with it IMMEDIATELY. It won't just save to the folder forever, but if you click on it, you can email it to yourself!!
11. I think that there are plenty of opportunities to succeed through this site and the use of the OK State Library.

Student Narrative

Chapter 6 Research Article

While using the Oklahoma State University library links and search system, I found many articles that I would be interesting in using for a research paper or assignment. Emotional and Behavioral Disorders in Children is what I would like to learn more about in chapter six, and even go into how parents, teachers, and professionals in the medical field should treat children with these disorders. It is ultimately a subject that is very important because the way we treat and “handle” children with these disorders has an affect on their development and health.

While searching for articles on this subject I ran into some complications when using the online library. It was helpful while at the same time being quite frustrating because many of the articles and search results would not open on the libraries website. However, I did find an online book that I was able to open and read the text online. “The Guidebook for Parents of Children with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders.” This source was perfect for the information I was searching for. This source went into describing how a child is diagnosed with a disorder, to how to treat children, and also what kind of professionals that are needed to work with these children.

Other articles such as this one, “Children with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders: Attributions of Parental Responsibility by Professionals,” showed up on my list of search results but I could not view any of the information because when I clicked on it, it showed as unavailable on the libraries website. This was frustrating because many of the articles I wanted to view showed up as unavailable.

I think that the library link can be helpful when doing research for a course, but I'm not sure if it would be my number one choice simply because I couldn't open many articles for the topic I wanted to learn more about.

I also found, after trying many different methods of searching, an article describing "ways to help children with emotional behavior disorders." It is a short article but it explains different techniques and even ways to diagnose a child with an emotional disorder. Of course a professional has to make the diagnosis, but there is also ways that we can help these children in their everyday life, especially in the classroom. I believe that teachers play an extremely important role in the development of children as they progress through school. If we stop to think about the huge role that teachers had in our own lives, just imagine how much of an influence we will one day have on our students.

If I had a student that had an emotional disability, I would want to know how to treat the child and how to handle any problems that may arise. All children are different so as teachers we have to find ways to handle problems while at the same time handling them with care and responsibility. This article even lists books for teachers and how to learn more about children with emotional disorders. I tried finding more articles about books like this, but there were none available to print out or make copies of.

Personally I like doing research about new things, especially when it comes to disorders and the psychological development of children. Simply because I want to learn more and be able to understand more about what children are going through and what they are having to deal with on a daily basis. If I do end up working in a classroom I want to be able to handle each situation in the best way possible if the need arises.

Appendix F

Table 3. Criteria, standards and how they were measured

Evaluation Question	Criteria	Standard	Measurement
What are the library users' perceptions towards new SGs as web tools for information Access?	Users perceptions Variables that come from analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to the site • Content density • Search process • Access to information 	User perceptions should be articulate with the intended goals of the SGs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • Open question • Narrative
What are the library users' expectations of new SGs as websites?	Users expectations : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements needs • Helpfulness 	Criteria established in the literature about web sites appraisals and designs were used to make the survey questionnaire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey • Open question • Narrative • Structured interview
Do the SGs meet the standards proposed in the rubric?	Criteria were based on the literature review regarding web design best practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Utility • Engagement • Visual appeal 	Criteria established in the literature about web sites appraisals and designs were used to adapt the rubric.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SGs analysis following rubric

Appendix G

Data analysis of the sample of SGs following the rubric

Guide Subject	Guide	communication	utility	engagement	visual appeal	Total
Education	Educational Psychology	2	3	3	4	12
Education	Counseling psychology	2	3	3	4	12
Education	Health and Human Performance	2	3	3	4	12
Education	Leisure Studies	4	4	4	4	16
Education	School Psychology	4	4	4	4	16
Engineering and Architecture	Rhetoric and Professional Writing	4	4	4	4	16
Human Sciences	Nutritional Science	4	4	4	4	16
Library Information	Database search tips	4	4	4	4	16
Social Sciences	Political Science	4	4	4	4	16
Agricultural sciences	Ag. Ed., Comm. & Leadership	3	3	3	3	12
Arts & Humanities	Finding Tests & Measurements	3	3	2	2	10
Arts & Humanities	Linguistics and Eng. As 2nd Lang.	3	3	3	3	12
Arts & Humanities	Religious Studies	4	4	3	2	13
Business	Marketing	3	3	3	3	12
Sciences	Physics	4	3	3	3	13
Sciences	Statistics	3	3	2	3	11
Social Sciences	Political Science	3	3	4	3	13
Veterinary Medicine	Plant & Soil Science	3	3	3	3	12

