

# **WorldCat Local Usability at UMD**

**Library Research & Innovative Practice Forum,  
June 4, 2015**

**Alex Carroll, Rebecca Kemp Goldfinger, Jaime  
Mears, Steve Quintilian, Madhu Singh**

# About the Study

- What we wanted to learn: how easily can our users use WCUMD to...
  - Identify materials at UMCP and consortial locations (CIC, USMAI)?
  - Identify different material types (articles, books, media)?
  - Identify appropriateness/relevance of results?
  - Effectively use facets/limiters and sorting?
  - Identify online versus print materials?
- We designed test tasks that would require users to do the above.
- Focusing on ability of tool to allow users to do the work.

# Study Participants

- Recruited six participants from three affiliate statuses
  - Two faculty
  - Two graduate
  - Two undergraduate
- Literature suggests a usability test include a sample size of approximately five
- Selecting from three different affiliate statuses provided opportunity to see whether users with differing levels of expertise experienced the discovery layer differently
- Participants awarded Amazon gift card for participation
  - Funding provided by UMD Libraries' Library Research Fund

# Study Administration

- Users complete the exercise while sitting at a dual monitor work station in TSD (second floor of McKeldin).



- Users input answers on one screen, and perform their searches on the other. Actions are screen captured and recorded.

# Study Administration (continued)

- Users submitted answers into Qualtrics
- Why Qualtrics:
  - Survey logic
  - Records timing of task completion
- In addition to survey functionality, Qualtrics provides us with “hard” data such as:
  - Percentage of subjects who successfully completed each task
  - Average time taken per task and subtask

# Study Administration (continued)

- User activity during the exercise was tracked using Camtasia
- Why Camtasia:
  - Voice capture
  - Screen capture
  - Easy to use
- Camtasia provides us with “soft” data points
  - When do users voice frustration?
  - When is it unclear where to click?
  - What features are they using to get their results?

# Study Analysis

- Combining Qualtrics responses with the (coded) audio and video from Camtasia provides a holistic picture of the user search experience
- Not just “can they search,” but...
  - Can users find what they need?
  - How long does it take?
  - Do they know where and how to get specific information?
  - Do they use any of the features of the discovery layer?
  - When and why do they get frustrated?

# Preliminary Results

(Analysis of results still ongoing)

- Tasks/subtasks that took the longest, on average:
  - Looking for unknown items that matched certain date, format, and subject criteria (3.2 minutes, 2.1 minutes, 2.1 minutes)
- Tasks/subtasks that took the shortest amount of time, on average:
  - Determining whether a book was held by UMCP (13.6 seconds, 8.7 seconds; although in the second case, only half the subjects were correct about ownership)



# Preliminary Results (continued)

- Permalinks - what are they?
  - Participants were asked to supply a permalink for each resource
  - Most participants struggled with at least one of the following:
    - What is it?
    - What is it for?
    - Where is it?

# Preliminary Results (continued)

## Qualitative information:

- What did you like about the WorldCat UMD search experience?
  - “The ability to **specify format**.”
  - “You can **sort the results** by different types of **media**.”
  - “It is easy to tell **whether or not UMD has access** to a given source/article...”
  - “...It is easy to **find the item at other institutions** or through interlibrary loan.”
- What did you dislike about the WorldCat UMD search experience?
  - “The **advanced search options reset** to default every time.”
  - “The search interface could be more streamlined and user-friendly - for example, ...**auto-populating search fields** when I move into/out of the **advanced search** window.”
  - “...I prefer to use the **[P]ubmed database** to look for peer-reviewed articles because what I get is **more pertinent** to the search.”

# Next Steps

- Further analysis of results from testing
  - Be on the lookout for a brown bag on results from first test
- Second iteration to investigate usability of new version of WorldCat Discovery (Fall 2015)
- Questions we hope to answer:
  - Is the new interface easier to use?
  - What's better? What's worse?

# Questions?

Or contact us for further information:

[ajcarrol@umd.edu](mailto:ajcarrol@umd.edu)

[rkemp@umd.edu](mailto:rkemp@umd.edu)

[jrm7qy@gmail.com](mailto:jrm7qy@gmail.com)

[squintil@umd.edu](mailto:squintil@umd.edu)

[madhus@umd.edu](mailto:madhus@umd.edu)

Thank you for attending!