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Usability Testing on a Tiny Budget: Lessons from COCC Library's Website Redesign

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Usability Testing on a Tiny Budget

Lessons from COCC Library's Website Redesign


Tamara Marnell
ILS & Discovery Services Librarian
Central Oregon Community College

Project Background

- In summer 2017 Central Oregon Community College migrated the website to a new content management system (“CMS”), scheduled to launch in December 2017.
- After editor training, the Systems Librarian redesigned the Library website and built it in the new CMS.
- Library staff provided feedback in Fall term.
- Usability testing with patrons was conducted in November 2017...
 - ...on a budget of **\$25**.



Previous Library Website (Ektron)



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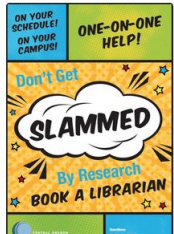


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Get on top of any final projects by booking an appointment with a librarian for research help! Librarians are available to come to your campus, on your schedule. But we do need at least 24 hours notice to schedule an appointment, so contact us today!
ow/lyntd30gxe9w



Redesigned Library Website (OUCampus)



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Writing Tasks

- Selected tasks based on...
 - Usage data
 - Anecdotal reports
- Placed tasks in two categories
 - Navigation tasks
 - Research tasks
- Organized by increasing difficulty
- Created printable form on [Google Docs](#)



Lessons from Writing Tasks

- The order of tasks can bias responses.
 - If a task “primes” users to take a certain action, they will repeat that action for future tasks without seeing alternatives.
- Library-centric wording can confuse participants.



Organizing Testing

- The Systems Librarian conducted the testing solo.
- Tests were administered at a computer cart at standing height placed in the reference area of Barber Library.
- Testing took place across three days during peak traffic times.
 - Tuesday, November 28: 12 pm - 2 pm
 - Wednesday, November 29: 11 am - 1 pm
 - Thursday, November 30: 11:30 am - 2 pm

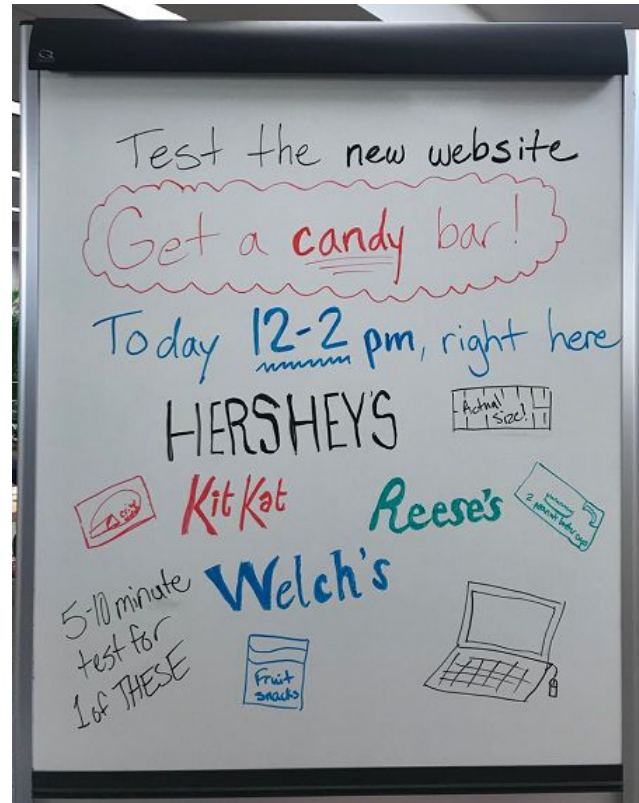


Recruiting Participants

- With a budget of \$25, costly incentives like gift cards and USB flash drives were out of the question.
- Selected the low-cost, high-appeal incentive of **candy**.
 - Chocolate bars are inexpensive, but students do not often buy them for themselves.
 - Other “frivolous” treats might work as well.
- \$25 purchased...
 - Two twelve-count boxes of assorted king-sized Hershey bars
 - One ten-count box of Welch’s fruit snacks
- ...and successfully lured in 33 participants.



Whiteboard Advertising Study



Lessons from Setup and Recruitment

- The testing was advertised on social media, but there was no evidence the advertisements were effective.
- Few participants actively approached the Systems Librarian. But once invited, many agreed to participate.
- Unintended consequences of the setup:
 - Students treated the computer cart as an information desk.
 - One person took two candy bars while the cart was briefly unattended.
 - Groups of friends volunteered.



Results: Navigation Tasks

Task	% Users who completed the task
Go to the library homepage.	93.94%
How late will the library be open this Friday?	100%
Without using the back button, return to the library homepage.	93.94%
Where would you go to find information about study rooms?	81.82%



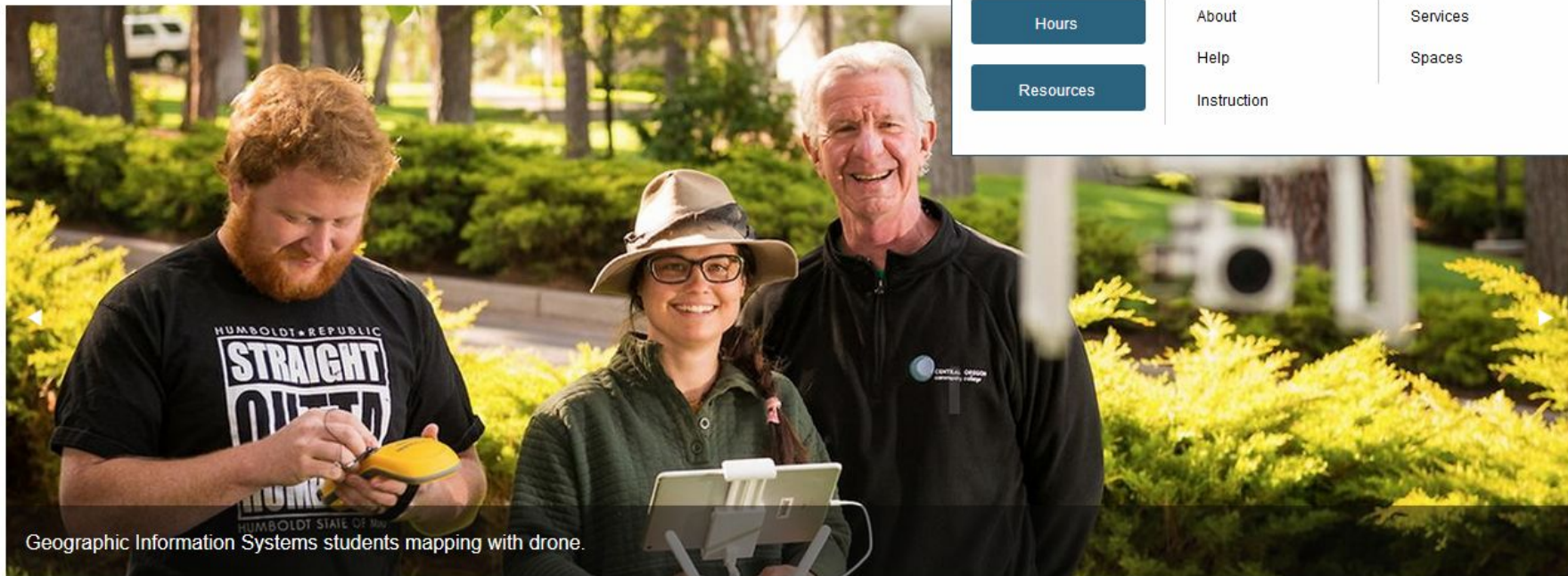
Lessons from Navigation Results

- Some students do not recognize the parent item of a dropdown menu as a clickable link.





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Geographic Information Systems students mapping with drone.





Library Home

About	V
Help	V
Instruction	V
Resources	V
Services	V
Spaces	V

Need Help?

refdesk@cocc.edu

541.383.7567

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Ask a
Librarian

Have an idea for improving library services? Share it with us through the [Library Suggestion Form!](#)

ABOUT THE LIBRARY

Barber Library supports student success on all COCC campuses by:

1. providing dynamic and high-quality resources, services and student-centered learning environments
2. leading Information Literacy efforts
3. offering rich educational and cultural experiences that benefit COCC and the broader community in a collaborative culture of diversity, equity and inclusion.

Read the full [Mission, Vision, Values, & Themes statement](#).



Hours

See open hours for the Barber Library in Bend.



Events

Learn about past and upcoming events at Barber Library.



Contact Us

Find phone numbers and emails for Barber Library staff.



Policies

Read policies for the use of library spaces and resources.

Lessons from Navigation Results

- Some students do not recognize the parent item of a dropdown menu as a clickable link.
- Many students do not see any information below the widgets and buttons at the top of the homepage.





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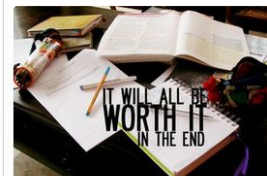
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Finals are just around the corner! Barber Library will be open until 9 pm this Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, so you can stay late to write those papers and crunch for those exams.



Mar 15, 2018

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@coco_library

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♥ E+

Mar 15, 2019

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Have an idea for improving library services? Share it with us through the [Library Suggestion Form!](#)

kanopy

Kanopy is a collection of over 30,000 streaming videos. Watch classic feature films, documentaries, and more!

Lessons from Navigation Results

- Some students do not recognize the parent item of a dropdown menu as a clickable link.
- Many students do not see any information below the widgets and buttons at the top of the homepage.
- Many students do not differentiate between the Library website and the rest of the College website.



Results: Research Tasks

	Search for the book <i>Oliver Twist</i> in the library catalog.	Search for scholarly articles about Charles Dickens.	Research Charles Dickens using Gale Literary Sources.
Day 1	91.67%	83.33%	66.67%
Day 2	90.00%	70.00%	30.00%
Day 3	81.82%	81.82%	81.82%



Lessons from Research Results

- Many students assume the first search bar they see will search the contents of all library resources.



Buttons on Day 1

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133 Databases found

A

[ABC-CLIO Reference Collection](#)

A collection of 35 academic encyclopedias. Covers many subject areas.

[Academic One File](#)

Popular

Peer-reviewed (academic), full-text articles from leading journals and reference sources. Extensive coverage of the sciences, technology, medicine, the arts, theology, literature and other subjects - authoritative and comprehensive. Millions of articles available online in full-text; updated daily.

[Academic Search Premier](#)

Popular

Academic Search Premier is a great starting place for all of your research needs! This multi-disciplinary database provides full text for more than 4,600 journals, including full text for nearly 3,900 peer-reviewed (academic) titles.

[AccessScience](#)

AccessScience is a comprehensive resource for science research. It includes articles and research updates, images and videos, biographies of well-known scientists, definitions of scientific terms, science and technology news, and a study center for science topics.

Popular Databases

The most frequently-used databases

[Academic One File](#)

Popular

Peer-reviewed (academic), full-text articles from leading journals and reference sources. Extensive coverage of the sciences, technology, medicine, the arts, theology, literature and other subjects - authoritative and comprehensive. Millions of articles available online in full-text; updated daily.

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We are not evaluating any trial resources at this time.



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Find academically acceptable articles in over 100 research databases.

All Subjects



charles dickens

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Find academically acceptable articles in over 100 research databases.

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A collection of 35 academic encyclopedias. Covers many subject areas.

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AND ▾		Select a Field (optional) ▾		
AND ▾		Select a Field (optional) ▾		

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Boolean/Phrase:
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Limit To ▾

- ☐ Full Text
- ☐ References Available
- ☐ Scholarly (Peer Reviewed)
Journals

1928	Publication Date	2018
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- ☐ Academic Journals (1,013)
- ☐ Reviews (900)
- ☐ Magazines (648)
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- ☐ Trade Publications (40)

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Term ▶

Search Results: 1 - 10 of 2,856

Relevance ▾ Page Options ▾ [Share](#) ▾1. [Charles Dickens, trachoma, and blindness in pre-Victorian England.](#)Academic
JournalBy: Margo, Curtis E.; Harman, Lynn E. *Survey of Ophthalmology*. Mar2018, Vol. 63 Issue 2, p275-280. 6p. DOI: 10.1016/j.survophthal.2017.10.004.**Subjects:** BLINDNESS; TRACHOMA; CONJUNCTIVA diseases; **DICKENS, Charles**, 1812-1870; NICKLEBY, Nicholas[Check for Full Text](#)2. ["Charles Dickens and his Wife:" A Sketch by Henry Doyle.](#)Academic
JournalBy: LONG, WILLIAM F. *Dickens Quarterly*. Mar2018, Vol. 35 Issue 1, p65-77. 13p.**Subjects:** SATIRE; PORTRAITS; CARICATURES & cartoons; **DICKENS, Catherine**; **DICKENS, Charles**, 1812-1870[Check for Full Text](#)3. [Dreams of Dying Girls: The Poetry of Thomas J. Ouseley and Charles Dickens.](#)Academic
JournalBy: MEBIUS, EVA-CHARLOTTA. *Dickens Quarterly*. Sep2017, Vol. 34 Issue 3, p256-261. 6p.**Subjects:** POETRY (Literary form); AUTHORS; Independent writers and authors; Independent Artists, Writers, and Performers; DREAM of the Dying Girl, The (Poem); **DICKENS, Charles**, 1812-1870; HOGARTH, Mary[Check for Full Text](#)4. [The Made Man and the 'Minor' Novel.](#)Academic
JournalBy: Neill, Anna. *Victorian Studies*. Autumn2017, Vol. 60 Issue 1, p53-73. 21p. DOI: 10.2979/Victorianstudies.60.1.03.**Subjects:** 19TH century English literature; EREWHON (Book : Butler); **DICKENS, Charles**, 1812-1870; ELIOT, George, 1819-1880; BUTLER, Samuel, 1835-1902[PDF Full Text](#) (476KB)5. [Charles Dickens, the American South, and the Transatlantic Debate over Slavery.](#)By: Wells, Jonathan Daniel. *Slavery & Abolition*. Mar2015, Vol. 36 Issue 1, p1-25. 25p. DOI: 10.1080/0144039X.2014.908027.

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Lessons from Research Results

- Many students assume the first search bar they see will search the contents of all library resources.
 - Labels and placeholder text don't help.
- Many students do not recognize subject guides as gateways to resources.



Future Experiments

- Googlify the Library
 - Bento box searching (a.k.a., federated searching)
 - Tabs by resource type: Images, Video, News
- Point-of-need links to tutorials
- Library DIY



Questions?



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