

Gathering Customer Input Prior to Home Page Redesign: An Ontological Study

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Abstract: Before redesigning the UT Southwestern Library's home page, we studied how clients organize and describe information. We wanted to identify which library resources and services were considered to be most important by our clients, how clients would organize those resources and services, and the terminology clients would use to describe their groupings. This poster presents the process we developed and identifies the resources necessary to complete this type of study successfully. We describe our card sort methodology, participant-selection process, detailed working procedures, and analysis methods.

Background: The Library's Content Team, which addresses the selection of content in the Library's Web site, studied how clients organize and describe information. We wanted to identify which library resources and services were considered to be most important by our clients, how *clients* would organize the library's electronic resources and services, and the terminology clients would use to describe their groupings. The results were used in the redesign of the library's home page.

Methodology: We chose a card sort to answer the questions of what resources are important to our clients, how clients want the resources grouped, and what labels would clients assign these groupings. The resources were selected

for the card sort based on web usage logs. We wanted known library users, and recruited participants both from several calls for study volunteers and from the library's client contact database. Thirty participants organized the preselected list of electronic resources and services and described the groupings using their own terminology. Participants also identified how frequently they used specific Library resources and services. Qualitative data from this study was then combined with quantitative usage data to determine those resources and services with the greatest importance to the largest number of clients.

Results: Participants arranged resources and services most frequently by format, followed by subject and they approached groupings or categories very broadly. Similar labels used to describe groupings meant different things to different participants and participants placed identical resources and services in multiple categories. Tools to help locate and utilize electronic journals effectively are considered to be very important, along with major resources such as MEDLINE and MICROMEDEX.

Outcomes: We reorganized resources and services based upon categories most commonly cited by participants, added direct links to the most frequently used resources and services, and placed resources in multiple categories to address client information seeking behavior.