

# User Experience at the UP Library

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Make today matter

# Why focus on UX?

- UX in a 21<sup>st</sup> century library
  - Library pride itself on focusing on the user
  - Difference between thinking about the user and engaging with the user
  - Responsibility of UX to ensure library systems, spaces, services and resources help users to work at their best
  - UX should not be seen as critique, but as a way of focusing on user needs

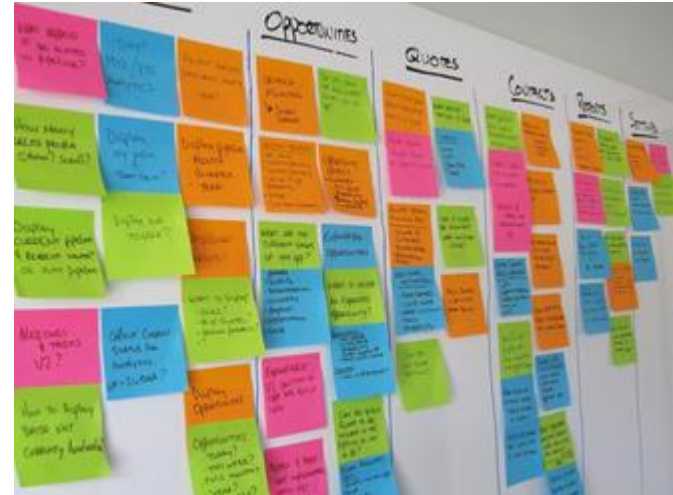
# Creation of a UX Unit

- Established in 2020
- First UX study in 2019
  - Refurbishment of the Health Science Library



# Projects: Summary

- Usability of the online library
- Usability of the library website
- Observation study during the pandemic
- Focus groups



# Projects: Usability of the online library

- UX units first project in collaboration with Marketing & Quality Assurance
- Took place during October and November of 2020
- Purpose of the study was to evaluate users experience of the online library

# Projects: Usability of the online library

- User research involved a survey and an usability/observation study
- Survey was conducted by our colleagues at Marketing and Quality Assurance
  - Total of 903 users completed the survey
  - 75% of the respondents were students
  - Users are satisfied with the online library services (3.24 out of 4)
  - Average use of online services (3.05 out of 5)

# Projects: Usability of the online library

- The survey gave insights into the following areas
  - Library Staff
  - Systems
  - Access & Subscriptions
  - Off campus access
  - Website
  - Books & E-books
  - Training
  - Communication

# Projects: Usability of the online library

- Second part was an observation/usability study conducted by the UX team
- Wanted participants to use our online services while being observed
- Identified three groups (Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Staff)
- Created five tasks each group had to complete
- Recruited five users from each group to complete the tasks



# Projects: Usability of the online library

- Undergraduate Tasks
  - You are stuck and require help from the library, how will you ask for online assistance?
  - What are the hours of your faculty library?
  - Find a book relevant to your study area.
  - Find an eBook relevant to your study area.
  - Book a training session at the library (assignment writing or anti-plagiarism)
- Postgraduate Tasks
  - You are stuck and require help from the library, how will you ask for online assistance?
  - Who is the information specialist for your subject area?
  - Find an article relevant to your study area.
  - Find information on the library website on how to write a proposal.
  - Reference tools manager on the library website

# Projects: Usability of the online library

## Findings

- General
  - Raise awareness of library services
  - Staff and Postgraduate users focus on the center of the screen
  - Staff and Postgraduate users only make use of drop down
  - Banner hides important information

# Projects: Usability of the online library

## Findings

- Communication
  - Staff are very reliant on their Information Specialists
  - Ask & Chat is a very popular feature and is used often
  - Phone numbers are very prominent
- Search
  - No clear direction when searching for information
  - Users prefer the search box on the main page
  - Google Scholar is very popular

# Projects: Usability of the online library

## Findings

- eBooks
  - Users were not aware of eBook collection
- Postgraduate support
  - Users are not aware of research guide and other services
- Training
  - Users struggled to find training sessions

# Projects: Usability of the online library

## Similarities

- Survey – Observation study
  - Too many clicks
  - Banners are hiding important information
  - eBooks
  - Training
  - Awareness of online services
  - Ask & Chat is a great service
  - Make research support more prominent

# Projects: Usability of the library website

- Usability of new library website in collaboration with the Department of Informatics
- Library website was evaluated using eye tracking technology.
- Similar tasks as previous study



# Projects: Observation study during pandemic

- Observation study when libraries reopened after lockdown
- Determine user behavior
- Visited the Merensky library, Law Library, Education library and Research Commons
- Spend a few hours at each location for about a week

# Projects: Observation study during pandemic

- Findings
  - In general the library was much quieter than usual
  - Mostly used for study purposes
  - No to minimal interaction between users
  - Unsure when entering the library but became relaxed when seated at their assigned seat
  - Areas with less supervision users were more relaxed and social



# Projects: Focus groups

- Focus groups
  - Bring together small group of people to answer questions in a moderated setting
  - Have fixed questions but you still have a lot of flexibility during the session
  - Relaxed environment
  - Informal
  - No wrong answers



# Projects: Focus groups

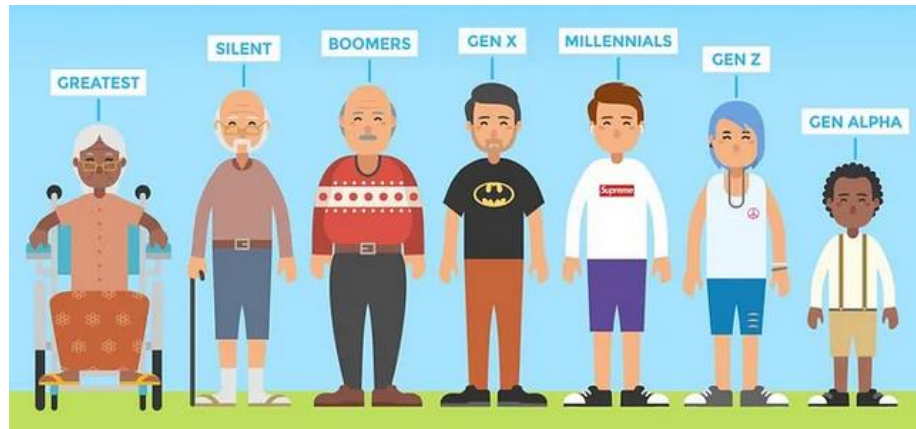
- NRF rated researchers
  - Hosted by Library Executive in collaboration with Marketing & Quality Assurance
  - Purpose of the focus group was to understand their specific needs
  - Scrutinize library services already available
- Students with special needs
  - Hosted by Marketing & Quality Assurance and UX Unit
  - Purpose was to identify challenges faced by special needs students when accessing library resources and services
  - Open invitation

# Projects: Focus groups

- Findings
  - Satisfaction with the library's spacious areas, discussion groups and availability of a dedicated special needs area.
  - Difficulties with elevators (Braille, Noise)
  - Computer software and hardware not up to date
  - Furniture in their spaces
  - Orientation sessions specifically tailored to special needs students / Raise awareness of services
  - Collaboration with the BOLD society
  - Brought up their concern regarding the institutional culture

# The future

- The next generation of Library Users (Generation Alpha)
  - Collaboration with local schools to engage with our next generation of library user



# Thank You



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