The Multnomah County Library Advisory Board (LAB) met on Tuesday, September 9, 2014, at Central Library in the U.S. Bank Room. Chair Sola Whitehead called the meeting to order at 7:33 am.

Board members present were: Emma Caplan, Erin Cooper, George Feldman, Bernadette Janét, Katie Lane, Ya-Li Lizik, José Padin, John Potter, Danika Stochosky, Maegan Vidal, Carlene Weldon and Sola Whitehead.

Board members excused were: Mardy Stevens.

Board members absent were: Megan Irwin.

Staff members present were: Vailey Oehlke, Director of Libraries; Becky Cobb, Deputy Director; Terrilyn Chun, Public Programming and Community Outreach Manager; Shawn Cunningham, Director of Communications and Strategic Initiatives; Jeremy Graybill, Marketing + Online Engagement Director; Rita Jiménez, Neighborhood Libraries Director; Shelly Kent, Human Resources Manager; Katie O’Dell, Youth Services Director; and Paige Hatcher, Administrative Analyst, Director’s Office.

Also in attendance were: Commissioner Diane McKeel, District 4, Multnomah County; Aaron Ridings, Policy Advisor and Community Liaison, Multnomah County Chair’s Office; Matthew Timberlake, IT Project Manager, Department of County Assets; Eric Zimmerman, Chief of Staff, District 4, Multnomah County; Wes Breazeale, The Library Foundation; Merris Sumrall, The Library Foundation; Kirsten Leonard, Friends of the Library; and Mary Stewart, Friends of the Library.

The Board approved minutes for the July 8, 2014 meeting.

**CHAIR’S REPORT**
Chair Whitehead welcomed Emma Caplan and Ya-Li Lizik as the board’s new youth members.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**
Ms. Oehlke reported that the Library District Community Committee meeting, originally scheduled for September 12, 2014, had been rescheduled for October 3, 2014.
Ms. Oehlke reported that the relocation of several administrative offices would occur on September 19, 2014. Becky Cobb, Deputy Director, shared additional details about the move and the new location, Lloyd Corporate Plaza.

Ms. Oehlke invited Terrilyn Chun, Public Programming and Community Outreach Manager, to share information about the 150th Anniversary Celebration, which is scheduled for September 27, 2014. Ms. Chun provided details about the event’s program and activities.

**BOARD REAPPOINTMENT**
Chair Whitehead proposed recommending Mardy Stevens for a second term on the Multnomah County Library Advisory Board. The motion was seconded and unanimously passed.

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY**
Jeremy Graybill, Marketing + Online Engagement Director, presented on the topic of usability testing and the results of such testing on the My Librarian portion of the Multnomah County Library website. The full presentation appends these minutes.

Mr. Graybill shared details about the rationale and methodology for user testing. Usability testing offers website developers the opportunity to observe participants as they accomplish a series of discrete, assigned tasks. The resulting data is used to evaluate and analyze the design and efficacy of a site and make improvements accordingly.

Mr. Graybill described the background, design, and goals of the My Librarian service and related that usability testing for this service provided an opportunity to observe how online users engaged with the MCL website as a whole.

In response to questions from board members Erin Cooper and Bernadette Janét, Mr. Graybill clarified that:
- a “web session” is the data point most equitable to an in-person library branch site visit, and
- the number of web sessions presented in the data includes only those sessions initiated from non-library computers.

Mr. Graybill shared the methodology for recruiting a demographically diverse group of participants.

Mr. Graybill shared that future efforts will include sharing the test results with staff to build awareness about online patron experience and illustrate why usability testing is important. Additionally staff will be trained in the art of usability testing for the purposes of performing regular evaluations of the website.
Mr. Graybill thanked The Library Foundation for its support of the usability testing work. Testing of the My Librarian service was made possible as part of the grant from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation to The Library Foundation.

In response to an inquiry from Chair Whitehead, Mr. Graybill related that the ability to integrate the visual appearance and format of the multiple platforms that are accessed through the mobile application varies based on each vendor.

In response to an inquiry from Vice Chair Danika Stochosky, Mr. Graybill reported that he would be sharing relevant test data with the statewide consortium that collaborates on the online reference service. He also related that similar usability testing is performed nationwide and libraries regularly communicate about trends and findings.

Ms. Oehlke noted that MCL’s resources allow it to perform work of this sort that other Oregon libraries may not have the opportunity to accomplish. With this in mind, MCL regularly shares its information with other libraries around the state.

THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION
Merris Sumrall and Katie O’Dell presented board members with sets of baby board books that are the result of collaboration between TLF and MCL. Ms. Sumrall and Ms. O’Dell shared information about the concept, design, and publication of the books. The books will be used in outreach to youth and families in the community and are published in English and Spanish.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY
Mary Stewart shared that FOL has eight new board members. Ms. Stewart shared that FOL had recently completed an eight-week session of selling memberships and books as part of Portland 5’s Summer Arts on Main. Additionally, Ms. Stewart reported on online sales for the month of August and recent donations of first editions.

Kirsten Leonard reported on FOL’s book sale revenue and contribution to library programming. Ms. Leonard shared information about the upcoming fall book sale, which will take place October 24-27.

GOOD AND WELFARE
The next LAB meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 14, 2014.

Sola Whitehead, Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:32 am.

Respectfully submitted by:
Paige Hatcher
Administrative Analyst, Library Director’s Office
Multnomah County Library, Oregon
USABILITY TESTING
+
MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY
Wikipedia: Usability testing is a technique used in user-centered interaction design to evaluate a product by testing it on users. This can be seen as an irreplaceable usability practice, since it gives direct input on how real users use the system.
Why Usability Testing?

“Two distinct advantages to formal testing: it provides feedback for site development, and it is an educational opportunity for designers and engineers, allowing them to see firsthand the decision-making process of an average site visitor” – Jupiter Research.

- Provides validation of design direction.
- Gives you real behavioral insights into how users actually use your site/app.
- Let’s you see patterns of use across users and uncover confusions or errors.
- Move beyond the “stupid users” myth to uncover un-intuitive features or functionality.
- Provides insight and empathy for the user’s experience to help you fix design errors and issues.
Why is this important?
Contact one of these librarians for a personalized reading recommendation or let us pick one for you. For all other requests, Contact us.
Caution: math

But the change is clear.
Library visits

- Web sessions
- Door counts

* IN MILLIONS

Year: 2012, 2013, 2014

Values: 0, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16
Mobile visits to the library

- **Smart phone**
- **Tablet**

*IN HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS*
So what does this new customer service + experience look like?

How are patrons using us?

What are we doing well? What can we do better?

How can we continue to improve the My Librarian innovation?

Let’s find out.
Here’s how
Methodology

- Branch/ Lab Usability testing
- 1:1 sessions
- User walks through tasks
- Post-test interviews
- No help; users follow tasks to find the answers (best practice usability testing methodology).
Who we interviewed

Results of My Librarian usability test conducted by Experience Dynamics. Task based walk through of live website; 25 Total users (qualitative research).

Card Holder:
16: Active card households
9: Dormant or non-card holders

Checked out items per week:
1-5 items (13)
6-10 items (12)

Active card holders:
3 primarily print
3 AV
19 both print and AV

Dormant or non-cardholders:
10 Information searchers (online research, buying from online bookstores or physical bookstores)

Frequency:
7 - weekly consumption
14 - monthly consumption
4- once every 6 months

Disability:
6 Low vision or Blind users

Internet usage:
25 moderate/heavy internet users

Branch Location:
5 Gresham
5 Hillsdale
2 Hollywood
13 Central

Researchers:
5 Participants who use the library to research topics

Content Discovery/Behavior:
17 Participants who look for or need help looking for information

Age: 20-25 = 3
26-34 =4
35-44 = 11
45-55= 1
56-65 = 4
66+= 2

Gender:
15 Female
7 Male
GOALS:

Test My Librarian service
Test how patrons use our site
Share that knowledge
The test
Some examples:

“You are looking for new titles for summer reading. Are there any spy novels, specifically regarding the Second World War Allied effort to decode German signals?”

“You want to cook more vegetarian food. Without much to go by, what would be a good vegetarian cookbook for beginners aimed at cooking for 1-2 people?”

“You’re not sure what to read next. What can you take to the beach?”

“Ask a librarian for help; assume the following:
- You love thrillers
- You don’t like violence
- You like romance but not too much.”

What does the librarian recommend?
DATA OVERVIEWS
Successful Task Completion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Looking for spy novels; is there a story on the Enigma machine?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Want to cook vegetarian, anything for beginners for 1-2 people; anti-cancer cookbooks (prostate cancer); Chat with librarian for help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Books for your kids. Boys don’t like to read but like comic books age 7-9; dyslexic daughter. Way connect with a library staff person to get reading recommendations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Audio books. Girl with the Dragon Tattoo. Any librarians who like dark Scandinavian mysteries? Check who librarians are; Email a request.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Paper for school; SEO topic; Call a librarian for help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Vegetarian cooking for lactose and gluten free. Best option to ask a librarian (Chat).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Next read for beach, ask librarian: love thrillers, no violence, some romance. What does librarian recommend?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Effort completing a task

AVG SUCCESS RATE

TASKS

N=19
Successful Task Completion

**Blind and Low vision users**

**Effort completing a task**

### TASKS

1. Looking for spy novels; is there a story on the Enigma machine?

2. Want to cook vegetarian, anything for beginners for 1-2 people; anti-cancer cookbooks (prostate cancer); Chat with librarian for help.

3. Books for your kids. Boys don’t like to read but like comic books age 7-9; dyslexic daughter. Way connect with a library staff person to get reading recommendations?

4. Audio books. Girl with the Dragon Tattoo. Any librarians who like dark Scandinavian mysteries? Check who librarians are; Email a request.

5. Paper for school; SEO topic; Call a librarian for help.

6. Vegetarian cooking for lactose and gluten free. Best option to ask a librarian (Chat).

7. Next read for beach, ask librarian: love thrillers, no violence, some romance. What does librarian recommend?

### AVG SUCCESS RATE

![Bar chart showing success rates for each task]

### TASKS

1. [ ]
2. [ ]
3. [ ]
4. [ ]
5. [ ]
6. [ ]
7. [ ]

**N=6**

*Note: Due to MCL IT issues, half the users were unable to complete the entire test.*
What would you change?

Subjective feedback

- Didn’t’t see MyLibrarian- had a bad experience with chat (s11)
- The site is huge—app narrows down few things you really need... (s1)
- MyLibrarian- this part was hard, email question--- they are starting a conversation- what if it’s one way- I need to know something... tell us about- I don’t have time... (s1)
- Nice to search everybody on here... didn’t see the Ask button--- didn’t know there were options on here... Scan this looks interesting, picture seems like a cool lady- like recommendation but can’t sort or scan it... Clicking through to a second page is no fun- rather just scroll down... My trust in her recommendations would grow- but I wouldn’t be able to find her as easily... If I could know I could zip her an email that would be awesome (s2)
- Contact options—too many (immediate: chat and call ) (s4) My Librarian—I don’t know where she is...
- Chat box- can’t see dialog- why is this so big at top (s4)
- Put MyLibrarian in search results...(s5)
- A lot of forms to fill in when want to ask a librarian... One form field with question (s8)
- Way to easily get back to Contact- from chat had to use Back button. Also on Chat- ENTER keyboard for form (s9)
- More clear that – to navigate to it (didn’t click Contact- clicked Account Services then left nav) (s10)
- Forms- Surprised they wanted to know what books I liked, what made them great--- just asking for a book list (simple question) not all that (s13)
- Searching the site for a book list is not intuitive- I would more likely go email (a librarian) (s14)
- If they want people to use the chat there should be a link on the front page or on the top menus- otherwise it gets lost- not super accessible (s15)
- I’ve seen other sites provide chat while you are doing other things...(s15)
- Wanted to be able to search more, narrow without reading so much (s16)
- Contact and My Librarian are different- why not in Explore?? Or centralized....(s17)
- Forms- Thought it would be faster and easier to have an answer but was a bit disappointed- filling in forms gets boring (s17)
- Create a Chat icon ... better if it came to you...(s18)
- To have to find the ML page a little trick (s18)
- Leave phone number and they can call you back...(s19)
User Verbatim

I am def likely to use this in future!...I am not one to talk to people but i would use this...(s8)

ML- I feel like i cant search all the tags on this page-- I don't know how to look for that-- cant tell --wants to search contents of the ML (s2)

Karen-she is into mysteries and an urban chicken farmer just like me! (s7)

ML hasn't been useful- profile pages (s2)

Librarian says- no cookbooks, search on your own (s1)

Chat- i dont know what chat information/ handle (s13)

Chat- I want to enter my question but i don't see how to do that...This kinda sucks...i do not know how to make the box come up (s11- older user)

Note sure how to get to talk librarian from search results...This is so frustrating i would want to give up! (s9)

Usually it says you're connected but i don't see that on the screen...(s4)

Chat smiling face- i think that means he's still searching... so he must be doing something...(s7)

I like to go to Library and speak to a human- and they could tell me how to do it online in the future (s11- older user)

My Librarian-- if i want to contact them that would take too long!! (s2) ...

These white boxes are not easy to see in chat (s4)

Chat, email- I should have been using this before (s18) ...

That would make it harder- (Skype/Google handle) it would be nice if they had a chat like they did with librarian (Contact page) (s1)

I am probably wouldn't use the service its for someone who isn't search engine savvy (s5)

Maybe it would be if they could have a Beep when the librarian came on- so you could browse another windows... (s19)

Usually it says you're connected but i don't see that on the screen...(s4)

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TAKEAWAYS:

People give us a lot of leeway based on how they view the library.

We’ve often given people a dilemma of too much choice.

We want to make sure that we’re offering patrons as much help as we can in every way possible. This is great for “hi-touch” personal service. This is not great for intuitive web design.

The search bar is the new librarian.

We need to think of our online service (virtual library) as a simplified, unified constellation of services. Help is help is help. Make it simple.

Patrons expect all of our third party services to be integrated just as seamlessly as Google, iTunes or Amazon.
NEXT STEPS:

For now, prioritize and implement suggested changes, both to My Librarian and site utilizing staff expertise.

Understand what we can’t change – third party tools, consortium arrangements and so on – and work to leverage beneficial design improvements.

For the future, work to create awareness and even potentially training to constantly test, revise and improve our online experience for the people we serve.
THANK YOU.

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