Primo Icon Survey Results

Test Objective

We conducted a quick and simple survey to determine the best icon for items that are labeled as "Archival Materials" in the UW Libraries catalog. When searching the Libraries catalog, results appear as a list with icons representing the type of work the items are and staff wanted to find an icon that conveyed that label to the most users especially since many did not think the default icon made sense as a representation for archival materials when it is most commonly used as an icon to indicate "edit".

Participants

We surveyed 25 people in Odegaard Library. One was not affiliated with the UW, two were freshman, two were sophomores, eight were juniors, four were seniors, six were graduate students, and two were staff. Four were international students. Seventeen regularly used the Libraries website, most for research.

Methodology

Participants were shown a screenshot of search results with the icon missing from the middle element (Archival Materials). They were asked to select an icon from four options that would best work to represent this item. They were then asked to elaborate on why they preferred the icon they selected.

Results

The icon which looked like a cardboard box received six votes, the one that looked like binders on a shelf received four. The default application icon of a pencil and paper received none. The majority of those surveyed, 13, chose the icon that looked like an open file drawer. Two respondent's selection were not recorded.

The reasons given for the majority selection were
- It looks like a bunch of records
- It seems the easiest to identify at a glance
- It reminded me of the way I archive files in my office
- The resemblance to a filing cabinet strikes me most as the "historical record" feel
- It shows the information is "archived"
- Reminds me of great organization and makes me see what is in front of me
- Makes me think of looking in historical place / old organized data
- Appears to show an open box like an opening for the material
- It looks similar to "records"
- Reminds me of files

- It relates the most to something that you archive or store away and it is easier to find quickly
- I've seen in the movies that archives are mainly kept in drawers in some storage room
- It resembles the archives most closely

For more information contact libuse@uw.edu