

# User Experience with UW Libraries Search (Primo) Facets

## Executive Summary

The UW Libraries is interested in understanding how patrons interact with Primo facets when they use it to search for library materials and whether the facets improve the search experience. Through a series of UX cafe sessions, we observed participants as they performed two multi-step tasks and then asked a series of follow-up questions. Two Libraries ITS staff member facilitated and took notes throughout the testing. Findings from our sessions indicate\_\_\_\_\_

## Test Objective

The goal of the UX cafe facet testing was to determine how easily people could narrow down their search results and whether they used the Libraries Search facets to do so. Another goal was to find out if the terminology used on the facets was clear to users. The test participants were given tasks that could be more efficiently completed through facet use.

## Participants

The total number of individuals who participated in the facet testing was ten, nine of whom were UW students:

- 2 Seniors, 3 Juniors, 1 Sophomore, 1 Graduate student, 2 unknown level, and 1 who graduated in 1971
- Areas of study included Public Health, Biology, Psychology, Economics, Sociology, HCDE, International Studies, and History
- 6 of the participants said they used the UW Libraries Search to research topics for papers they were writing

## Methodology

Our methodology included one scenario based multi-step task asking users to find a print version of a book, determine how many copies were available, find the most recent version, and see if the edition was available in the library to check out.

We also included one “what do you think this means...” task which consisted of looking at the left column facets and asking participants to tell us what they thought each one was used for in search and whether they found it useful.

We then asked four follow-up questions to determine if the facets made sense, were helpful or useful, and whether the participant would use them again. As one staff member facilitated, the other took notes on the paths chosen and comments made by participants as they completed each step.

## Results

### Major observations for Task #1:

1. Most used the top search bar to search by just title or title and author combined
2. Two used the advanced search to look for author
3. Expect the information (such as location) to be in the sidebar
4. Sidebar is used more than Advanced Search
5. Thought there was an error because the results appear below the fold on a laptop
6. Several do not know how to use the facets or the information that displays in the popup:
  - a. One person counted all the rows to find out how many were available
  - b. One confused the Author born dates with the Publication dates
  - c. One used the Resource type facet to narrow down to print books
  - d. One used the Publication date range but when the resource type "print" disappeared, became confused
  - e. One used the start date feature to find the most recent version
  - f. Another entered year-by-year 2016, 2017... as a specific date to try to locate the most recent

### Interesting side observations:

- *Only one student used (noticed) the "sort by..." dropdown at the top of the facet column because she was a frequent catalog user*
- *One participant used the back button a lot for navigation because he didn't see where else to click to get around and continually lost his place in results)*
- *User did not know what *The Tempest* was so he said he would trust the search algorithm to provide the most relevant which means he would only click the top results.)*

### Major observations for Task #2:

1. Three said "Collection" means the provider/source making the item available online (e.g. online databases). One said it is magazine publications for students to access. A couple others said ProQuest is an online catalog but "collections" is not descriptive enough.
2. Most identified "LCC" as the library code for classification, topic, or genre of books.
3. None had used "MeSh" before and were unsure of what it meant while a few thought it was similar to topics in literature but geared more to medical or health related topics.
4. One found "Topics" to be too specific to be useful and uses Research Guides instead
5. One said the "Resource type" would be helpful for finding journal articles.

### Interesting side observations:

- *One user said he would Google a book's ISBN number to see what the book is and then use the Alma number from the description to look for it on the stacks*
- *Two said they would Google to find the latest version in print.*

### General feedback on whether the facets make sense and are useful:

- Resource type, pub date are the most useful for narrowing the search scope
- Topics are very specific so might not be as useful

- One did not find the facets helpful at all
- One did not notice them at all until asked specifically about them in task 2 because his focus was on the search bar area

## Recommendations or Lessons Learned/Next Steps?

- Used more than others: resource type, publication date to narrow the time frame to more recent materials, sometimes selects the library.
- MeSh and Classification LCC were considered the least helpful so their place as last in the column is probably good.

For more information contact [libuse@uw.edu](mailto:libuse@uw.edu)