Usability Test Report: Bento results interface

Summary
Emily Daly and Ian Sloat conducted usability testing on the functionality of the Bento results interface. The test was conducted at the temporary main entrance of Perkins Library on July 18, 2014 from 1:30 – 3:00 pm. The test consisted of a short set of background questions, one task featuring six parts and eight post-test questions that lasted approximately 10 minutes. See Appendix for test script. The test was piloted with an undergraduate student assistant on July 17.

Participants
Six individuals (excluding our pilot test participant) completed this test. Participants included two faculty, two undergraduates and two graduate students representing the following departments: psychiatry, math, English, public policy, biology and political science.

All six of the participants had used the library website to search for books, articles and other materials, and three of the participants had used the ‘All’ search from the Libraries homepage prior to the test. Of the three participants who had used the ‘All’ search before, one person used it once every two weeks, one used it every week, and one used it every day.

Key Findings
1. Every participant noted that it is easy to distinguish ‘Articles’ from ‘Books & More’ on the results page and noted that the new display is an improvement over the current ‘All’ display.
2. Every participant successfully used the ‘See All’ button to find more additional results in a particular category.
3. Several users commented that ‘Other Resources’ is hidden at the bottom and noted that users might not notice ‘Other Resources’ in their initial searches.
4. Multiple participants noted that scanning the page and understanding the differences between the columns and the results is slightly difficult and that larger headings or distinctions between categories might enhance usability.
5. Only one participant had any ‘Images’ results display in his Bento search, and the ‘Staff’ and ‘Research Guides’ sections were not populated with search results in any of the six tests.

Recommendations to consider
1. Make the titles of sections more distinguishable from the results.
2. Distinguish the colors of the fonts used (Note: One user commented that it was particularly difficult to read the blue link text and the gray hint text).

For more information, please contact emily.daly@duke.edu
3. Move ‘Other Resources’ to the third column on the page so users will be more likely to see it.
4. Enhance search for the ‘Staff,’ ‘Research Guides,’ and ‘Images’ sections so participants are more likely to receive relevant results in these categories. Consider eliminating ‘Staff’ and ‘Research Guides’ sections until search is robust enough to consistently return relevant results. Consider displaying all ‘Images’ rather than only those that have thumbnails in order to increase the likelihood that users see ‘Images’ results.
5. Remove the “Powered by Google” text in the lower right corner of the search boxes using Google CSE – two users commented that they would be less likely to see or use results “from Google.”
6. Resolve the issue that leads to the same cover image displaying for different titles in ‘Books & More’ (Note: Multiple participants commented on this bug).
7. Ensure that the same results that appear in the ‘See All’ Summon results page appear in the Bento interface (Note: One participant found no relevant results in the ‘Other Resources’ Bento box and so clicked ‘See All’; he was pleased with the results on the subsequent Summon results interface).

Results

Task one

Part a: Use the Bento search page to search for something you are currently thinking about or researching for a class, project or personal interest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of participants</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Used the search bar to search for an author, book title or subject.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part b: Take a moment to consider the results and interface

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of participants</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Browsed the page and looked at the results.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part c: What are the types of resources or materials you could find or learn more about using this interface?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of participants</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did not notice the different sections, was more focused on the results. This person found a lot of secondary resources that featured the title of the book he was looking for – The Origins of Species – but could not find the actual book itself.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of participants</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saw and commented on all of the different categories – articles, books, other resources, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part d: Find a result from this page you think will be useful in your research; Part e: Use this interface to find this item or more information about it

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of participants</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every participant successful selected a title and navigated to the catalog record or the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part f: How would you find more items like this one from this interface?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of participants</th>
<th>Would perform another search to find more material (upon more exploration, both participants noticed ‘See All’ and said they would use that)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Would use the ‘See All’ to find more material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Would look at the references in the article and use them to find more material (upon more exploration, participant noticed ‘See All’ and said she would use that)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

POST-TEST INTERVIEW

A) What are your thoughts about the way this interface looks?
- Miss the suggestions on the side that PubMed provides
- Like that the books and articles are separated
- Do not like the font colors – blue text is hard to focus on because of its wavelength and the light gray font is not easy to read either
- Looks fine
- ‘Other resources’ being at the bottom was a surprise, because you do not always scroll down that far – think it should be the top of the third column
- Likes having the call numbers visible
- Would like a sidebar or table of contents at top of page that lets me know what all of the different sections are
- Did not notice the sections on the right side at first (Images, Research Guides, etc); these were smaller sections and seemed unrelated to the search
- Helpful having all articles and books separated
- Easy to see the different sections
- A little bit confusing
- Headings are not much bigger than results; they should stand out more
- It is nice to have results from all of these things

B) What would you expect to find in the Research Guides category?
- Not sure, imagine it would be online bibliography by topic
- No use for me – there are no research guides for my field
- Not sure, would expect it to be linked to a library guide on the topic of their search
- Expected different database options
- Doesn’t know what it would be about, did not know they existed and has never used one

What would you expect to find in the Images category?
- Expect it to be similar to a google image search
- Not useful, there aren’t images for my research
- Would expect photos related to the search – such as book covers
- Images on the topic, or images from an article that would relate to the topic
- No idea

What would you expect to find in the Other Resources category?
It says encyclopedias – would not have known without the little heading provided
Results shown are not related to the search, but after clicking see all it shows materials that is related
Saw a dissertation and a video in the results, which they found to be a weird combination. After looking into it, it makes sense because it is everything other than books and articles.
No idea
Links to different databases or search engines
No idea

C) Are there any labels or headings on this page that don’t make sense to you? If so, which don’t make sense?
- The ‘Our Website’ section seems useless because it will just give us the hours
- Staff section doesn’t seem to be working well, and it is not worth having on the page if it is not going to work.
- Had a ‘download full text link’ for an article that popped up from nowhere, selected seemingly at random
- None
- Does not know what ‘electronic resource’ means – is this an ebook or another format?
- ‘Other resources’ is a confusing label. Is it other databases?
- ‘Research guides’ is confusing – is this other databases or library guides? Why doesn’t anything show up?

D) What is most helpful about the way the results are presented on this page?
- Division between articles and books is the best
- Don’t have to select books only or articles only like in the past, can get both with one search, but overall not much different than before
- Likes having the call numbers displayed for books and the page numbers displayed for articles.
- Likes how it searches everything, but separates it, so it’s easy to read. Much easier than the previous all search.
- The different categories being shown on the same page
- Likes the columns and clear presentation
- Different color headings helps contrast

E) Least helpful? What changes or improvements would you make?
- Sections like ‘Staff’ and ‘Our Website’ are irrelevant
- Wished the ‘Other Resources’ page pulled accurate results
- ‘Other Resources’ at the bottom seems non intuitive
- Too much going on in the page; would like a header/sidebar/menu with all the different sections listed so I can jump to them easily
- Cannot scan the page easily because of the columns; a shift from how I usually scan pages
- Have to scroll down all the way to see everything
- The info provided such as call number of page number for an article is nice, but makes scrolling harder
- Labels aren’t big enough; they blend in with the results

F) What is missing from the results screen that you’d expect to see when searching for materials from the Libraries homepage?
• Missing references to other articles and resources like in PubMed
• Fewer results displayed than in a regular search
• Videos seem to be missing
• ‘Book & More’ lists ebooks and not physical books, which some people might want exclusively

G) Would you use this search again? Why, or why not?
• No – Not familiar with it. Thinks google scholar and pubmed work better for his field
• Wouldn’t mind it – Would use it if it was the one presented to me but would not seek it out.
• Yes – Good for doing research, but not when you know exactly what you are looking for. This can help replace shelf-reading because you get to see a lot of items with the same subject.
• Yes – Like how I can see all the different things at once, will help with research
• Yes – Likes to have everything come up at once
• Yes

H) Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience with this interface?
• The header [search bar and top-level navigation] of the page eats up way too much space
• We are sacrificing utility for aesthetics, showing us less to make things prettier
• Images and film should go together in one section
• The ‘powered by google’ makes her think that section is an advertisement
• More information is provided (year, availability) than in the older search
• The cover images used in the book section is always the same cover repeated, regardless of the title of the book. This needs to be addressed.
• Not as many results in any one section as before
• Font color is hard to read; “blue is never a good choice”

Appendix: Bento results interface usability test script
Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study.

We are currently developing a new interface to improve the way results appear when searching from the Duke Libraries homepage, and we’d like your input.

I will be asking you to complete a task that involves finding articles, books, images and other resources to support your research through Duke Libraries. Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers and that we’re testing a tool — not you.

Okay, first some general questions:

1. Are you an undergrad, grad student, faculty member, staff member?
   a. If you are an undergrad, what year are you?
   b. If you are an undergrad, what is your major?
   c. If you are a grad student or faculty or staff member, what department are you in?
2. Have you ever used the Duke Libraries website to search for books, articles or other materials to support your research?
   a. If yes, would you say you search for materials from Duke Libraries every day, every week, every month, once a semester, or less often?

3. Have you ever used the ‘ALL search’ [POINT TO ALL] on the Duke Libraries website to search for books, articles or other materials to support your research?
   a. If yes, would you say you use the ‘ALL search’ every day, every week, every month, once a semester, or less often?

Now I’d like you to test a search interface we’re currently developing. It would be really helpful if you would share your thoughts and observations as you are completing the tasks, so try to think aloud as much as you can. Like I said, there are no right or wrong answers.

**TASK:** Think of a topic you’re currently thinking about or researching for a class, project or personal interest.

a. Use this test search page [http://libcms.oit.duke.edu:8080/find/bento] to search for books, articles or other resources that would help you as you research this topic.

b. Take a moment to consider the results and interface.

c. What are the types of resources or materials you could find or learn more about using this interface?

d. Next, find a result from this page that you think would be useful in your research. What is this item?

e. Now, use this interface to find this item or more info about it.

f. You’d like to find more items like this one – how would you do that from this interface?

Okay, that concludes the task. I have a few questions I’d like to ask you about your experience using this search page.

**POST-TEST INTERVIEW**

a. What are your thoughts about the way this interface looks?

b. What would you expect to find in each of these three categories [point to Research Guides, Images, Other Resources]?

c. Are there any labels or headings on this page that don’t make sense to you? If so, which don’t make sense?

d. What is most helpful about the way the results are presented on this page?
e. Least helpful? What changes or improvements would you make?

f. What is missing from this results screen that you'd expect to see when searching from materials from the Libraries homepage?

g. If given the option, would you use this search interface again to locate materials for your research?
   a. If yes, why?
   b. If no, why not?

h. Is there anything else you’d like to tell us about your experience using this new interface?