Usability test report: Booking project rooms in The Edge

Recommendations to consider

1. Make Project Spaces webpage less text-heavy, and draw attention to key information and links related to reserving spaces
2. Include link to book project rooms for one-time use on Project Spaces webpage
3. Add information about individual Project Rooms to reservation system (e.g. photo, room size; see http://library.duke.edu/using/room-reservations/perkins-bostock)
4. Increase size of dates and timeslots on iPad, or make it more obvious that it is possible to zoom in on calendar
5. Change colors in reservation system from blue and green to gray and green (Note: Most students understood that green squares indicated available spaces, but two hesitated when completing their reservations)
6. Ensure ipads in The Edge are checked frequently and well maintained; we discovered 5 broken styluses and 3 iPads without internet connections during this study
7. Add “sign out” function to touchscreen kiosk to assure students that their information is secure
8. Optimize the room reservation pages and reservation system for iPads and phones
9. Market room reservation system to students through DSG email blast; indicate that all students are eligible to reserve library spaces for one-time use (Note: One student mentioned this explicitly; another told us he did not know students could reserve spaces in the Libraries)

Background

Emily Daly and Emma Boettcher conducted usability testing on The Edge project room reservation system (for short-term use) in the Perkins lobby on September 2, 2015 from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm. The test consisted of a short set of background questions, one task, and five post-test questions. The test lasted approximately 5-10 minutes.

A very similar version of this test was conducted in March 2015; this follow-up study tested changes made as a result of the March study. See Appendix for full test script.

For more information, please contact emily.daly@duke.edu
Questions we hoped to answer through the test included the following:

- What assumptions do people make about how to reserve rooms in the Edge?
- If they attempt this process online, are they able to find the information they need easily? Is the Project Spaces webpage about how to reserve rooms clear and informative? Is the DUL room reservation webpage clear and informative?
- Is the process of using the iPads or kiosk user-friendly and easy?
- What do people find difficult about the process?
- What would they change?
- How do people find out about room policies for the Edge?

Participants

Seven individuals completed the test. Participants included three undergraduate students (43%) and four graduate students (57%). They represented the following departments: mechanical engineering, engineering management, psychology, statistics, biology and Italian. One first year student was undeclared. When asked whether they had ever reserved a room before, one (14%) responded that he had. None of the students had reserved a room in The Edge before.

Key findings

What assumptions do people make about how to reserve rooms in The Edge?

All students were new to reserving rooms in the Edge. Three students (43%) went to a computer in Perkins and booked using the DUL Room Reservation page, two (29%) used their phones (one ultimately used the kiosk, and one ultimately used an iPad), and one (14%) had seen the iPads in The Edge and went straight to them. Of these students, three (43%) said they would also use another library service, either by going to a help desk or asking online. A seventh student said that he would ask IT but didn’t mention looking on the website or in The Edge itself; he was not able to complete the task.
If they attempt this process online, are they able to find the information they need easily? Is the Project Spaces webpage about how to reserve rooms clear and informative? Is the DUL room reservation webpage clear and informative?

The three students who tried to reserve a room on the computer were able to do from the DUL Room Reservation page and found the process to be straightforward. A couple wondered out loud if green represented availability. Students who landed on the Edge Project Spaces first were redirected to the touchscreen and iPads, not to the DUL Room Reservation page, and saw the long-term reservation form before they saw this information. Most students skimmed or skipped over the policies. Two students searched for information entirely from their phones; both ended up at The Edge Project Spaces page and did not see that they could book rooms in The Edge online.

Is the process of using the iPads or kiosk user-friendly and easy?

The two students who used the iPads had issues with broken styluses - one student tried two different iPads until he found a stylus that worked, and the other used his finger. One student commented that the timeslots and calendar dates were too small, and he also had to lean down to see the screen. The student who used the kiosk found it easy to use. Most students skimmed or skipped over the policies.

What do people find difficult about the process?

- Finding an available time
- Long-term reservations are available on The Edge project spaces page, but short-term aren’t
- Broken styluses for the iPads
- Leaning down to use the iPad
- Deciphering details in the small calendar on the iPad

What would they change?

One student wanted an app; another wasn’t aware that they could be reserved online and wanted an online reservation system. One student commented that the Project Spaces page had too much text.

How do people find out about room policies for the Edge?

Some commented that they would assume the room was available for a certain number of hours and ask their friends or look online to confirm. Two students thought that the timeslots represented how long the Project Spaces could be booked for; of those, one thought you could book multiple sessions anyway. One student clicked all around The Edge site, even reading some of the policies, but couldn’t find the policy about how long room reservations were for.
Task notes

Undergraduates: 3

- Senior, statistics
- First year student
- Senior, biology and Italian

Graduate students: 4

- Engineering management
- Engineering management
- Psychology
- Mechanical engineering

Have you ever booked a room in Duke Libraries?

- yes, but not often
- no, new to the school
- no
- no, but has used a table in the library. Grad students use offices, or he grabs an empty room or classroom
- no
- no
- no

Have you ever booked a project room in the Edge?

- No, no, no, no, no, no

Task: You've heard there are Project Rooms in the Edge for groups to use. You're interested in booking one for a group you're currently part of. Show us how you would do that.

- Goes to computer
- Goes to iPad
- Goes to computer (or would ask librarian)
- Goes to computer (or would ask on Help Chat)
- Would ask IT
- Uses phone (or would ask at help desk)
- Uses phone
Person 1

- Goes to computer
- Searches “book a room perkins”
- Goes to DUL room reservation page, clicks on Edge “Reserve a Project Room” button
- Clicks on date from calendar
- Selects three slots and filled out name and info (only participant to select multiple timeslots)

Person 2

- Would use a tablet, hadn’t tried it yet
- Goes into Edge, bypasses kiosk and two tablets where the internet connection was down
- Tries two tablets and can’t get stylus to work (each time, tries to book the room the tablet was in front of and confirmed room number)
- Uses stylus to book the third room he tries
- When asked, says he knows he could use an individual tablet to book any project room

Person 3

- Would ask a librarian or get information on the website
- Goes to library.duke.edu
- Goes to Reserve a Room using right sidebar
- Clicks Edge “Reserve a Project Room” button
- Asks “Green is available?” as she was trying to select a room
- Fills out information
- Starts going to mail.duke.edu to confirm reservation, but was told the task had ended

Person 4

- Would contact a librarian on Chat
- Goes to library.duke.edu
- Goes to Reserve a Room using right sidebar
- Clicks Edge “Reserve a Project Room” button
- “Green is probably available”
- Scrolls past booking details and policies “blah blah blah”
- Concerned about being able to cancel the reservation, learned it was tentative but still wanted to make sure that it wasn’t being held unnecessarily

Person 5

- Hasn’t heard about the Edge - would ask an IT person
- Would walk down to IT and ask or ask friends
• Did not wish to look online or pursue further

Person 6

• Would go to help desk, but asked if she could use her phone to look
• Searches “duke room edge booking"
• Clicks on Project Spaces page
• Sees where it talked about long-term reservations, learned that she would have to go to iPad or touchscreen in the Edge
• Goes to Edge, found kiosk and clicked Reserve Spaces
• Uses selector to pick time she wanted
• Scrolls past policies
• Starts typing her name without clicking in the first box, then corrected
• Sees she would get email

Person 7

• Knows about touchscreen but thought an app on the phone would be more convenient
• Searches “duke edge project room" on phone
• Clicks on Project Spaces page
• Goes to form for long-term use; Emily asks him if he wants long-term or one-time use, and he responds that he wants to book a room for one-time use, not every week
• Learns from Project Spaces page that he can use touchscreen or iPad to book
• Walks to Edge iPad, comments that Project Spaces page has too many words, that he usually just grabs a room that’s available, and that there’s an Edge project room he’s never been able to find
• Leans down to see iPad
• Tries using stylus, then uses his finger
  Has difficulty scrolling to see available times, misjudges in what direction he’s scrolling the timeslots
• Fills out form and books room
• Comments that he will have to wait since he gets his Duke mail auto-forwarded

What was most challenging about booking a Project Room in the Edge?

• Finding times that spaces are available
• Finding time that spaces were available - had noticed previously that rooms were booked when visiting the Edge
• Wouldn’t assume she or just anyone could make online bookings - would Wonder if there was formal process
• Nothing - if you look on the page, it’s right there
• N/A
- Wasn’t that hard
- Too much text on the Edge website

What would you change to improve your experience booking a Project Room in the Edge?
- Wouldn’t change anything - convenient to Google and get website directly
- Would want to do it online, but didn’t know how
- Some way to disseminate information about room booking in the library - announce that it’s open, that anyone can do it regardless of affiliation, and which spaces are available
- Pretty straightforward - are these all identical rooms? would help to have info in case he was bringing in a larger group
- N/A
- Be able to book from a phone
- Had to lean down to see iPad, didn’t know the schedule scrolled (hadn’t ever had time to play with it) and thought rooms were only available until 6, thought it would be annoying if a room was available and his friends were there waiting for him to book it, would like a bigger calendar and bigger hour slots (found them “debilitatingly small”), maybe a simplified blueprint of the Edge so you could see what room you were booking and wouldn’t have to wander around.

Can you think of alternatives to iPads or kiosk for booking PRs?
- Would want to do it online but didn’t know how
- Would prefer an app that automatically signed him in or a button on the website for short-term use

What is the maximum length of time you can reserve a Project Room in the Edge? (If respondent has an answer: How did you learn this information? If respondent doesn’t know: Where would go to learn this and other information about reserving Project Rooms in the Edge?)
- 2-3 hours (just assuming. Would find out more from friends)
- As long as it’s available (would confirm on Duke Library website)
- Participant went back to booking process and saw from policy box that it was 3 hours
- No idea, would assume 1 hour (clicked on Edge image on DUL room reservations page, saw on Project Spaces page that being 15 minutes late would forfeit the room but didn’t see the three hour policy. Browsed Spaces, Events, FAQ’s on Edge site but didn’t find the answer)
- N/A
- Looks like half an hour, and you can book multiple sessions (would look online to confirm)
• 3 hours (wasn’t sure if he had learned from website while booking, or if he was assuming from friends’ experience booking rooms in the Link)

Is there anything else you’d like to tell us about your experience reserving a room in the Edge?

• N/A
• N/A
• N/A
• Not sure what he would use the Edge for
• N/A
• Tried to exit out of kiosk and couldn’t figure out how
• Had previous problems finding markers for Edge whiteboards

Appendix: Test script

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study.

We are trying to learn more about how students and faculty reserve spaces in Perkins & Bostock, and we’d like your input.

I’ll be asking you to complete a task that may involve a little walking around. It would be very helpful to us if you could think aloud as much as possible while you’re with us. Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers and that we’re testing our systems and policies — 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 booked a room in Duke Libraries?
   a. If so, which room or type of room did you reserve?

3. Have you ever booked a project room in The Edge?

Now we have a task for you to complete. Again, it would be really helpful if you would share your thoughts and observations as you do this, so try to think aloud as much as you can. Like I said, there are no right or wrong answers.
**TASK:** You’ve heard there are Project Rooms available in The Edge for groups to use. You’re interested in booking one for a group you’re currently part of. Show us how you would do that.*

Okay, that concludes the task. I have a few questions about your experience reserving a room.

**POST-TEST INTERVIEW**

1. What was most challenging about booking a Project Room in The Edge?

2. What would you change to improve your experience booking a Project Room in The Edge?

3. [If appropriate] You said you’ve reserved a room in The Edge before today: Describe your experience making a reservation and using the room in The Edge. Are there things you’d recommend changing based on that experience?

4. What is the maximum length of time you can reserve a Project Room in The Edge?
   a. If respondent has an answer: How did you learn this information?
   b. If respondent doesn’t know: Where would you go to learn this and other information about reserving Project Rooms in The Edge?

5. Is there anything else you’d like to tell us about your experience reserving a room in The Edge?

Thank you for your time today!

*If participant opts to go to a computer, encourage him to use a Tier One station in Perkins, and allow him to navigate Google, the DUL website, etc. to determine that he must go to The Edge to reserve a room. If time permits, ask participant to walk to The Edge to reserve a room.