

Omaha Public Library Usability

...

<http://omahalibrary.org>

Directive

Primary audience for this study: adult public.

Identify ease of use and provide recommendations for any problems found.

Get feedback on design and layout of website.

Verify that website is using best practices for good websites.

Methods

5 people surveyed representing different age groups: 21-30, 31-40, 41-50, 61-70, 71+.

Answers captured 3 ways simultaneously.

- Screen capture done through Microsoft Xbox game capture on Windows 10.
- Samsung S7 Edge used to record user at computer with audio.
- Questions and keystrokes logged with Samsung Tab 4 using Google Forms.

Goal

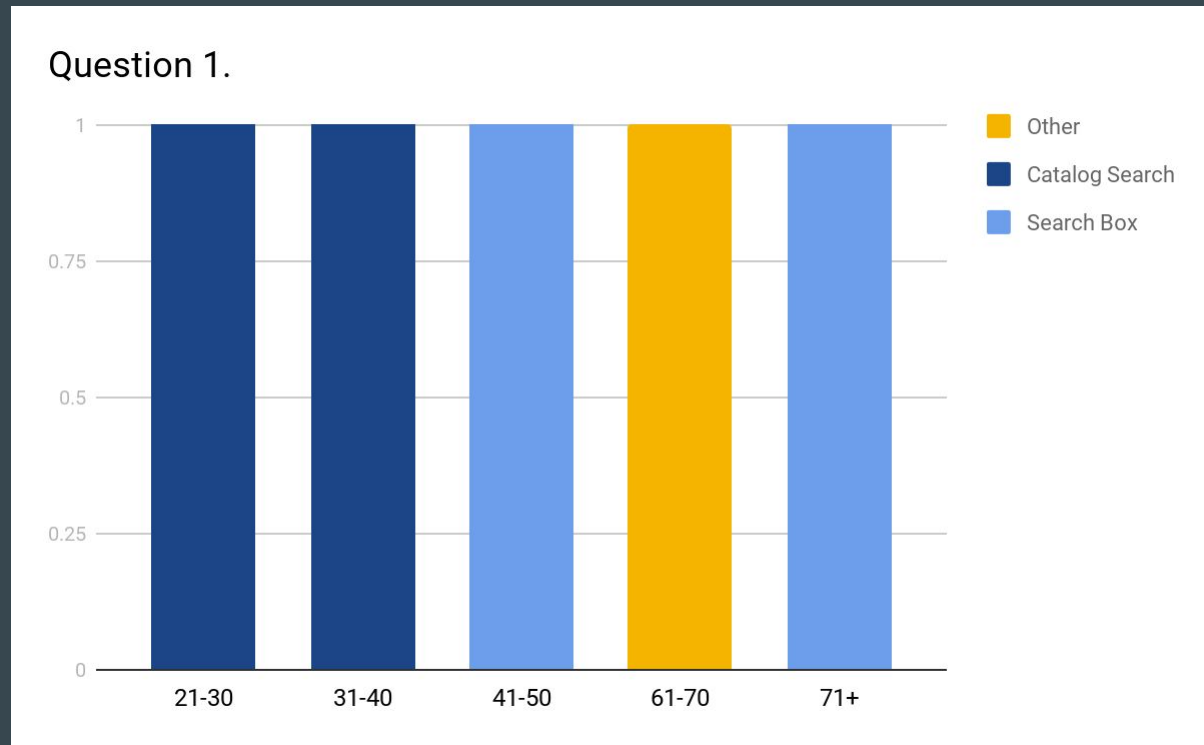
The library website is easy to use and navigate.

Question 1: Does the library have *My Fair Lady* on DVD?

All users found the correct answer. Ages 21-50 found the search box or catalog button and completed their search in less than 1 minute.

Age 61-70 started searching DVDs from a photo image that led them to a list of new DVDs. They spent 2 minutes on this. Then, found the search box, typed the term, and double clicked what they typed. At this point, I asked them to move on, but they refused and kept clicking on icons randomly, which with the search term in the box, actually provided the result.

Age 71+ told me the history of the movie before searching for it using the catalog.



Goal achieved.
All users found requested information.

Goal

People can find and access the databases.

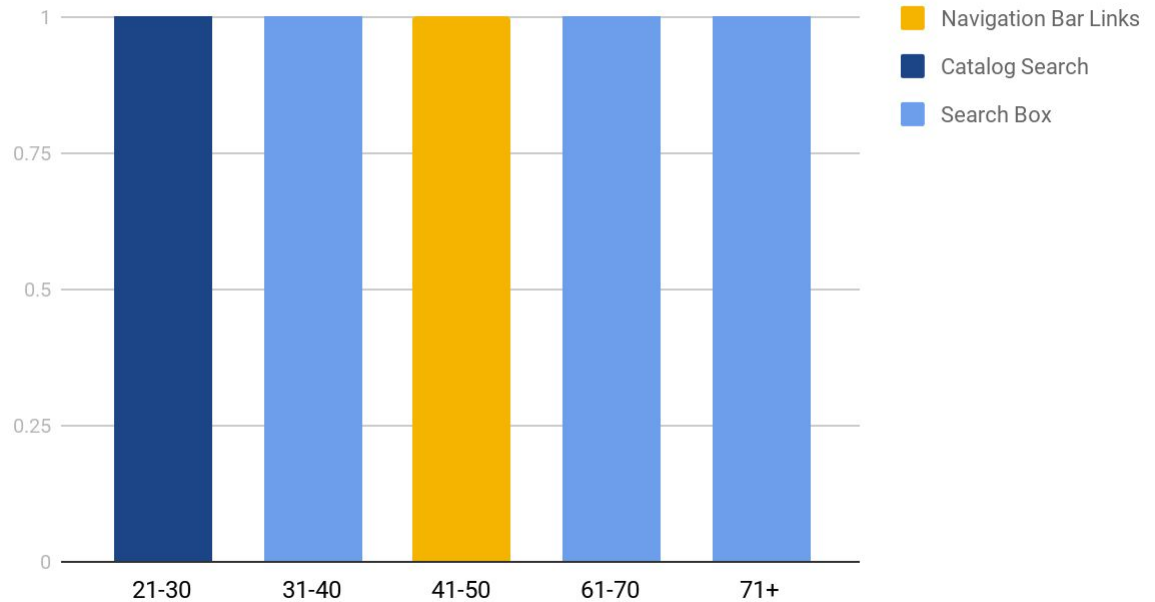
Question 2: Where can you find a practice test for the ACT?

All found a correct answer, but several found different sources.

The catalog search brought up books and practice modules. The search box searched the whole website and brought up specific practice tests. The navigation bar links took the user to a section specifically designed for prep tests, the landing page for the tests the search box brought up.

Notably, the 61-70 user accidentally closed out of the whole website in frustration.

Question 2



**Moderate success achieved.
All users found requested information, but
none went directly to database to search.**

Goal

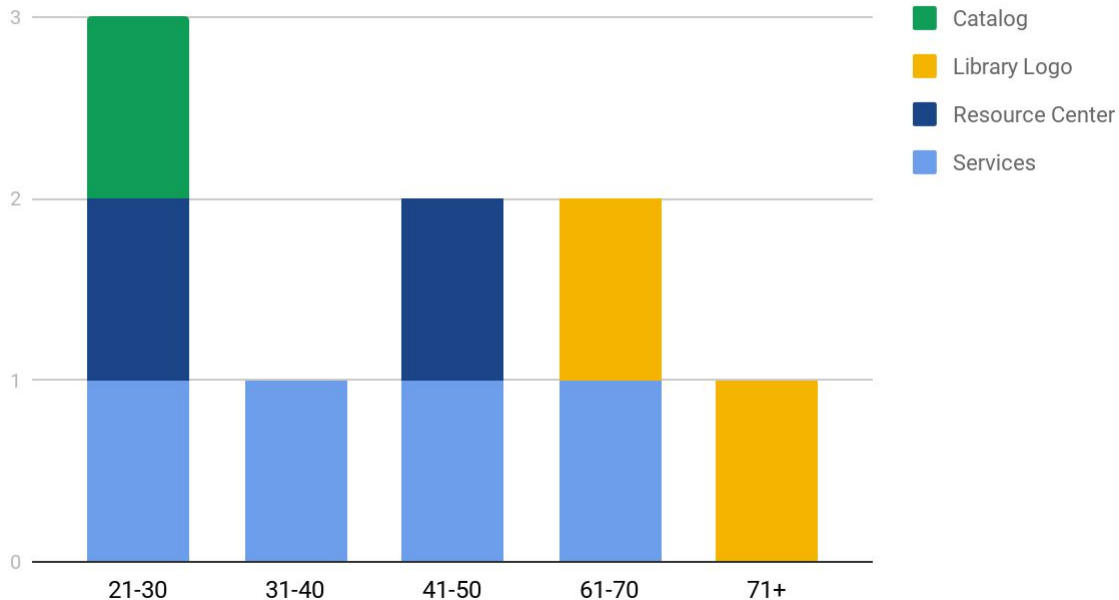
The website services are clear and easy to understand.

Question 3: Is there a room I can book for 145 people?

$\frac{4}{5}$ users found the correct answer to this question.

Most users attempted multiple paths before finding the right answer. Two users notably clicked the Omaha Library logo which brought the user back to the homepage. At this point, one user gave up on finding an answer.

Question 3



Moderate success.
**4 of 5 users found list of services library
provides.**

Goal

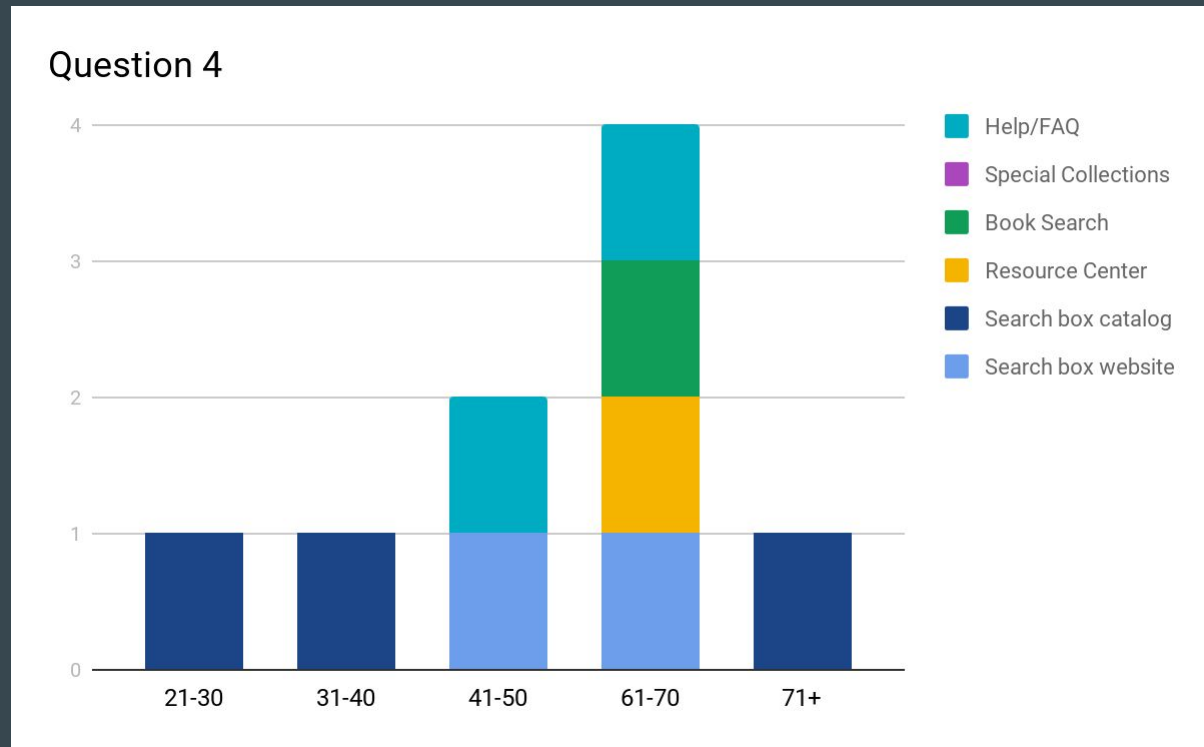
Special Collections are searchable and easy to find.

Question 4: Is there a location I can go to checkout purple jalapeno seeds?

Most users utilized the catalog search for this question.

$\frac{4}{5}$ users spelled jalapeno incorrectly. Under the results for these answers, there was a very clear link, “Did you mean jalapeno?” and clicking that, they arrived at the correct answer.

2 users found the search this website box and their query sent them to a FAQ about the special seed collection, which linked them to the catalog with their search term entered in the box.



Goal achieved.

**All users found requested information.
Most users spelled incorrectly and website
redirected misspelling to correct part of
special collection catalog OR special
collection FAQ.**

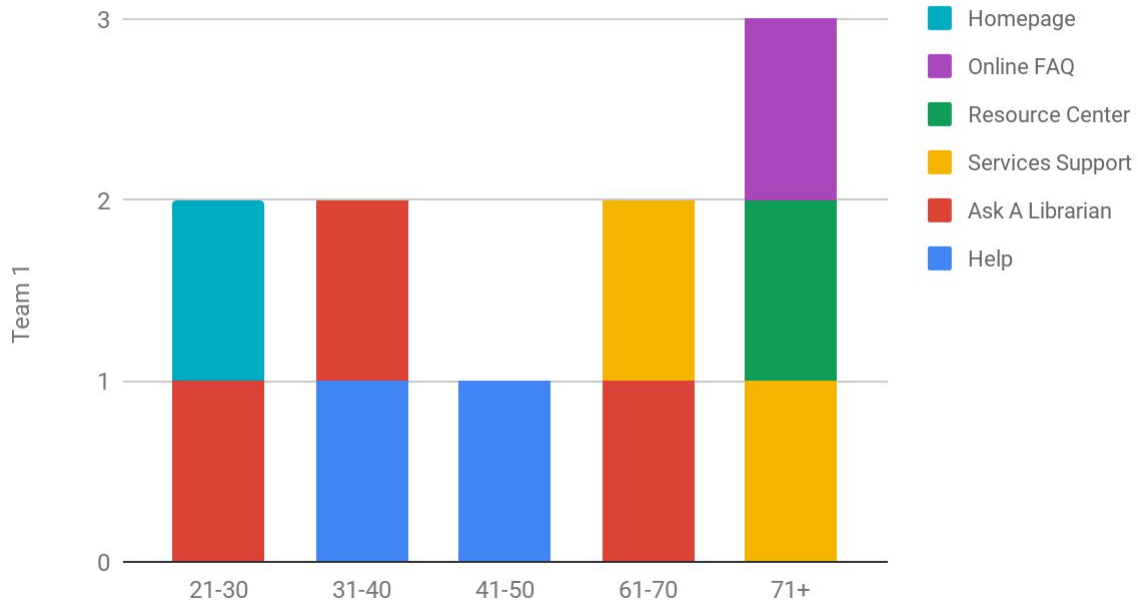
Goal

Website provides users with features so they do not always physically have to come in to library.

Question 5: Is there a phone number I can call to renew a book?

All found the correct answer. Many tried and failed at least one method before arriving at the right answer. One participant arrived at a page for teens rating books, however, at the bottom of this page was an image about renewing materials with the correct information.

Question 5



Goal achieved.

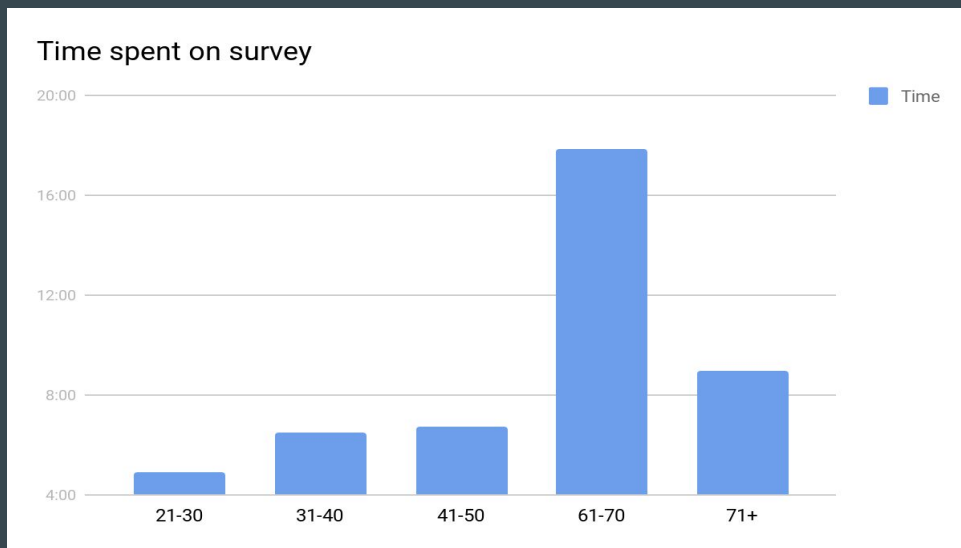
All users found requested information.

**One user attempted to make the phone call to
verify the answer. 6 different places to find
this resource were found.**

Findings Recap

$\frac{4}{5}$ questions ended in successful results for all participants.

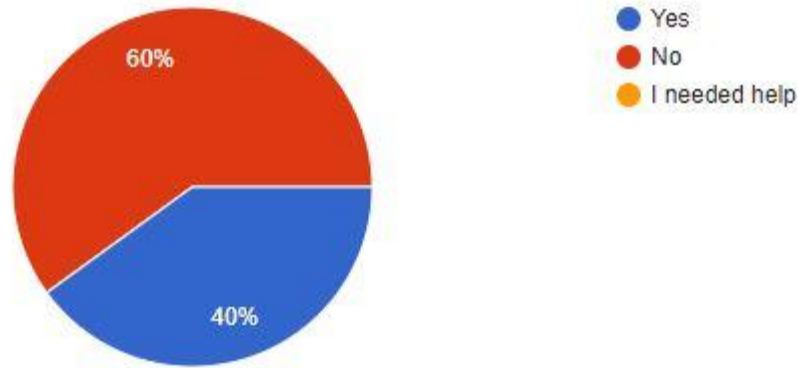
The website succeeds on many levels because of reciprocal findings.



Additional Questions

Did you have any trouble navigating to find answers to these questions?

5 responses

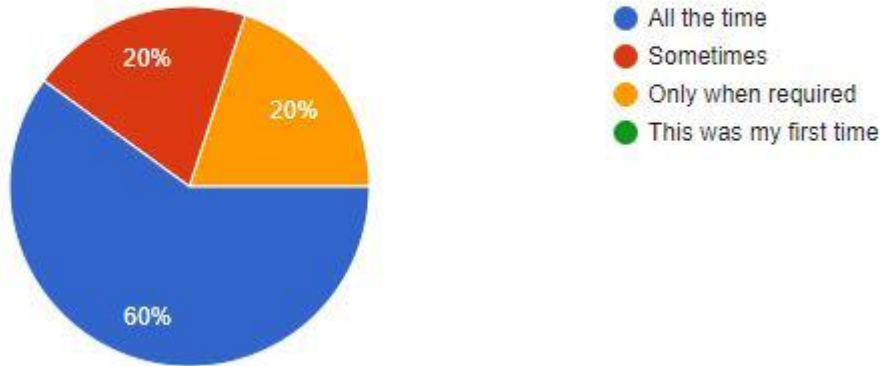


Trouble navigating the website? Although no one answered that they needed help, 3 would have benefit from simple user instruction from a librarian.

Additional Questions

Personal Information: How often do you use computers or tablets?

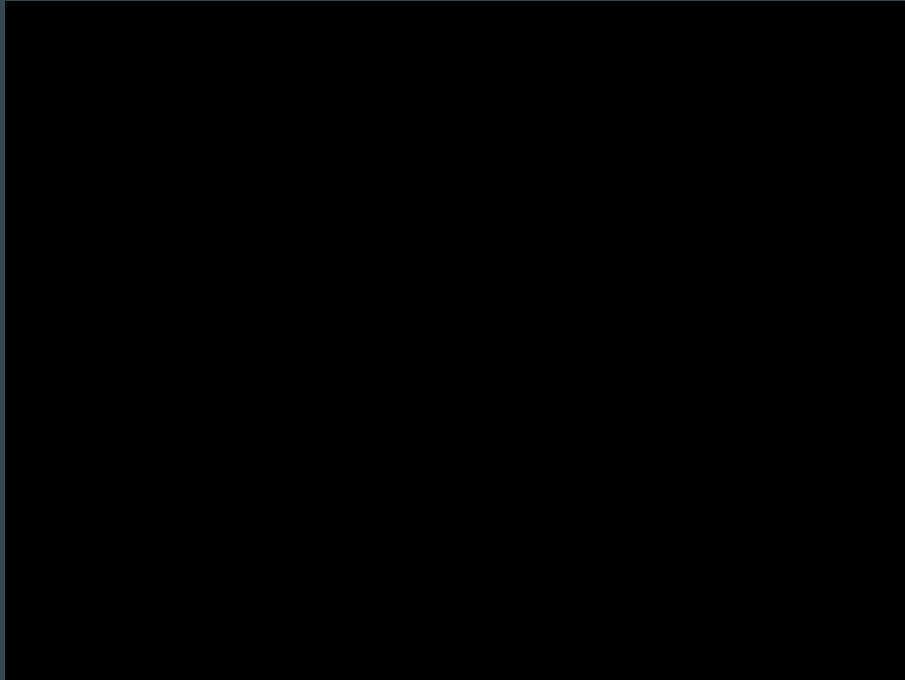
5 responses



Computer fluency was reflected as 3 users being very fluent, however, those were not the 3 users who had the easiest time answering questions. The results of this question compared with the results of the survey suggest fluency doesn't translate to ease of use.

Additional Questions

Participants were asked to rate website appearance and give notes



My Recommendations

Design: Website is reciprocal providing many paths to get the same information and information is copied onto several pages so it is easy to find the answers using multiple methods.

Navigation: Search box is difficult to use. Drop down box to switch between catalog/website was only grasped by younger users. Initially, box is a magnifying glass icon which some groups did not recognize as the search icon.

Language: Website allowed incorrect spelling to find correct results. Terms on navigation bar were confusing to users.

Architecture: Website had site map at bottom of every page. Logo returns to homepage.

Trends and practices: Color scheme and icon design is generic. Does not appeal to majority. Suggest updates to make people stay longer on pages. Navigation and site map are static on every page.

Additional Analysis

- Patrons favored the search box, but also struggled with this feature.
- Databases were searchable via catalog or website, but no one knew to choose this.
- Age did play a factor. Younger were more apt to choose the right search correctly or determine quicker that a path was wrong. 61 group did not want to give up, but did not know how to proceed. 71 group gave up quickly if first path was incorrect.
- Older groups favored clicking on images and reading the whole page. Younger groups chose to be short and concise with keyword searching.
- Ask a Librarian was used by $\frac{4}{5}$ of the users. The link leads to FAQ before request.
- Website struggles with appeal to broad audience.

Discussion