

Research Questions

- Do new users find the BPL Special Collections search intuitive? Can they successfully locate and request to access these materials either digitally or in the Reading Room?
- Can unfamiliar users identify what they are looking for?
- How do unfamiliar users get help?
- How do unfamiliar users make an appointment, plan your visit, request scans etc.?
- How do unfamiliar users identify what they are looking for?
 - Step 1: Can you navigate to special collections from BPL?
 - Step 2: Can you identify the different platforms and what they are?
 - Step 3: Can you find an item?
 - Step 3: Can you get the information for the item and go to the reading room account to request it?
- What are discovery tools and what are their purposes?

Usability Test Planning

1. Study goals
 - a. Better understand how new users navigate the search and discover tool on bpl.org
 - i. First impressions
 - ii. User assumptions
 - iii. How long it takes
 - iv. How much/if help is needed
 - v. How many/what errors were made
 - b. Gain a deeper understanding of specific user pain points and usability issues
 - c. Better understand what aspects of bpl.org are working well for users
2. Format and Setting
 - a. Remote
 - b. Monitored
3. Broad Tasks - have users navigate through Special Collections via broader and simpler tasks. Instructions: In this first section we are going to ask you to do various tasks to familiarize yourself with the different Special Collection Pages
 - a. Please navigate to this provided url (<https://www.bpl.org/>).
 - b. Go to the Special Collections portion of the website.
 - c. You want to look for Special Collections materials, but are not sure where you can go to do so. Where would you go? Take some time to explore what you find.
 - i. These are the Discovery Tools, based on the Name, Images, and Description, what do you think the different tools are?
 - ii. You want to learn more about how to search through the Archives department. Navigate to the department's searching guide.

- d. You have issues identifying what you're looking for. Where would you go to get help? From BPL staff?
 - i. If you don't know about Special Collections and requesting materials how/where would you look for instructions?
 - e. You're looking to visit the in-person Reading Room. Where would you go to make an appointment? Take a few minutes to read over the instructions.
4. Specific Tasks - have users complete similar (but more specific) tasks again to test whether they can apply their gained knowledge. Now that you're familiar with the Special Collections page, we are going to ask you to do various tasks more specific to finding and requesting an item.
- a. Navigate to the Boston Public Library website (<https://www.bpl.org/>) and head to the Special Collections section.
 - b. Now you are going to be tasked with looking for some Special Collections' items.
 - i. Broad
 - 1. You want to find materials that are related to Walt Whitman for an American Literature research paper. Where would you go to find these? Go there.
 - 2. Now, you wish to see items revolving around dance as you wish to write a book about it. How could you find these? Navigate to where you could find this information.
 - ii. Open-ended
 - 1. Search for a letter that is related to your interests. Where would you look for this?
 - c. You want to view a Special Collections' item in-person in BPL's Reading Room. Where would you go to set up a time to see it? Go there.
 - d. Now that you're on the Reading Room Request website, request to see the item that you found in a Reading Room appointment. Use the provided account below.
 - i. Username: **umsi-bpl-team@umich.edu**
 - ii. Password: **Goblue23!**
 - e. Since this is for research purposes we are not going to have you submit the request but by hitting submit you technically have successfully requested the item. At this point you would get confirmation and instructions for your in person visit.
5. Usability Metrics
- a. Number of errors
 - b. Time taken to complete tasks
 - c. Time taken to fix errors

Usability Test/Interview Script

Introduction (& Consent)

Hello, my name's [moderator], and I'm going to walk you through today's session. As I mentioned over email, my team is currently working with the Boston Public Library for our "UX Senior

Capstone” course to redesign the Special Collections portion of their website, specifically their “Search & Discover” page. Joining us on the call are [observers, and their affiliation].

I’d like to begin by thanking you for making time to speak with us. Your feedback is valuable, and it will help us determine how to improve BPL’s website. We’d like to keep this session to around [duration; for example, 30 minutes]. Does that still work for you?

Great. If you need a break or to stop at any time, please let me know.

During this session, I’ll start by asking you a few questions about your experience with libraries and their materials. Later on, I’ll ask you to share your screen and accomplish a few tasks using the website we’re evaluating. Lastly, I’ll ask you some final questions regarding the tasks you completed and your thoughts on the website.

Please be aware that there are no wrong answers. As you go about using the website, I’ll ask you to think aloud as much as possible: to describe what you’re looking at and what you’re trying to do. There are no wrong answers, we want to hear your honest reactions.

If you have any questions as we go along, just ask. I may not be able to answer them right away, since we’re interested in how people do when they don’t have someone sitting next to them to help. But if you still have any questions when we’re done I’ll try to answer them then.

With your permission, I’d like to record this call. The recording will only be used by our team to help us figure out how to improve the site, and it won’t be seen by anyone except those with a need-to-know. The recording will be deleted once we’ve gathered our data from it. Do I have your permission to record this call?

Great. Do you have any questions for me at this time?

If not, then let's get started. If you have any questions or concerns in the future, you may contact me at my email: umsi-bpl-team@umich.edu.

Warmup (Interview Questions)

1. Have you ever requested materials through a library website before?
 - a. If so, what did you request? Which library?
2. Have you ever requested special collections materials at a library?
3. Do you have any experience working at or with libraries?

Set up Screen Sharing

Okay, great. We’re done with the initial questions, and we can start looking at things. The first thing I’d like you to do is share your screen. You can do that by clicking “Present now” in the

bottom-right corner of our video chat. Before you share, make sure to close anything you don't want recorded.

Task Completion

Thanks. Now I'm going to ask you to respond to the following few scenarios and tasks. I'm going to read each scenario/task out loud, and I'll also share the objectives in text via chat.

6. Instructions: In this first section we are going to ask you to do various tasks to familiarize yourself with the different Special Collection Pages
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7. Instructions: Now that you're familiar with the Special Collections page, we are going to ask you to do various tasks more specific to finding and requesting an item.
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Follow Up (& Interview Questions)

Great, we're finished with the bulk of the test. You mentioned [something they said out loud] earlier and I didn't want to jump in at that time. Can you say more about that?

Also, I was hoping to ask some additional questions regarding your experience and what you thought of the website. Would that be fine?

1. Did you run into any trouble or difficulties while completing any of the tasks?
 - a. If so, which ones?
2. Which task was most difficult for you? Why?
3. Which task was the easiest for you? Why?
4. Which task took the longest amount of time for you to complete? Why?
5. Which task took you the shortest amount of time to complete? Why? What caused you to struggle?
6. Could you describe your experience with navigating the website?
 - a. Did it seem clear on the website where everything was or could be found?
 - b. Did it seem clear what each discovery tool's purpose was based on the descriptions provided?
 - c. Have you run into any issues?
7. How has your experience been using the website?
8. Were there any aspects of the website that you thought could be improved?
 - a. If so, which ones and how?
9. What aspects of the website did you particularly like or enjoy?
10. How easy was it to avoid/recover from making errors/mistakes while using the website?

Wrap Up

Thank you so much for your time. Your participation today will be very useful in our research.

Before we finish, did we forget to ask about anything?