

Everyone “loves” our new space, but how do we know that it’s really working?

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Introduction



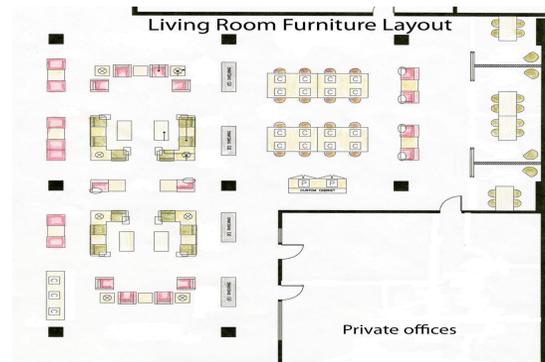
In 2013, the University of California San Francisco Library repurposed a sizable area (4,000 asf) just inside the main entrance that had been used to house the core reference collection, an information services desk and patron computers. Because the space is visible upon entering the building, it created a first impression of a library that was underutilized, unwelcoming and outdated.

We collaborated with a design to team to envision a new space called the “Living Room” which would include:

- Open group study spaces
- Comfortable furniture clusters
- Standup “quick stop” workstations
- Sit-down workstations for longer tasks
- Ample power outlets & wireless access
- Popular Reading & Consumer Health hard copy collections
- Space for art exhibition

Our goals were to create a:

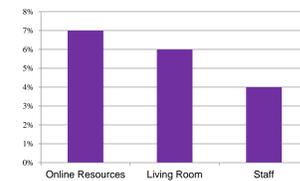
- Welcoming ambience to draw people into the building
- Dynamic meeting/collaboration space
- Bridge between the traditional library and the classrooms and labs elsewhere in the building



The “Living Room” – Assessment of an Informal Learning Space

LibQUAL Comments

In our Spring 2013 LibQUAL survey, the Living Room drew the 2nd highest number of positive comments, just behind Online Resources.



Sample Student Comment:

“The new space on the main floor is excellent. Create more clean/inviting and private studying spaces with similar qualities please.”

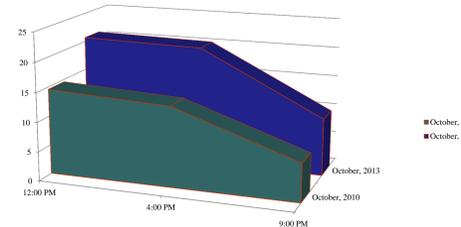
Ethnographic Interviews

In Spring 2014, we conducted a series of ethnographic interviews. Some common themes emerged:

- Users find the space inviting and attractive.
- Ample power outlets are appreciated and make the space functional.
- The Popular Reading collection contributes to the welcoming, relaxed vibe.
- Users are unclear about allowable noise levels.
- Patrons want a coffee bar to be added to the Living Room.

Usage Counts

Patron usage was measured in October 2013 and we found it had increased by 47% over a prior October.



- Heavily Utilized: Sit-down computers and clustered seating area.
- Comparatively Under-Utilized: Open group study areas and standup workstations.

Key Findings

What’s Working Well

- The Living Room successfully creates a **welcoming impression** upon entering the building.
- The space is both **functional** and **attractive**.
- The numerous **power outlets** and **robust wireless** are appreciated and essential to its functionality.
- The **clustering of furniture** makes it easy and comfortable for patrons to interact.

What Could Be Better

- There is **confusion about proper noise levels**, and users feel uncomfortable speaking in normal conversational tones.
- The need for quick-stop **standup work stations** is less than anticipated.
- A **coffee operation** is needed to complete the ambience.

Next Steps

- Install a coffee kiosk.
- Enhance the signage about noise levels to clarify expectations and increase awareness .
- Install a color printer and scanner.
- Develop a better use case for the standup computers.