Quest for Continuous Improvement: Gathering Feedback and Data through Multiple Methods to Evaluate and Improve a Library’s Discovery Tool

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• Implemented fall 2011: a web-scale discovery tool

• Expectations for Summon

• Continuous Summon Improvement (CSI)Group
The environment

- User changes
- Library changes
- Vendor changes
- Product changes
- Complex information environment
- Change + complexity = need to assess using multiple streams of feedback
Quantitative Methods

- Availability studies
- Data analysis
Qualitative Methods

• Surveys
  – Staff
  – user

• Usability testing
  – Navigation
  – Scenario-based

• Heuristics
Assessment goals

- identify specific performance problems
- highlight strengths and weaknesses of functionality
- gain insight into how users search using Summon
- judge patron and staff perspectives on the product overall and identify specific aspects seen as valuable by users and staff
- begin to judge the impact of the discovery tool on the use of library resources and services
- gauge use and performance over time
Triangulation – Example 1

Using multiple methods to identify specific performance problems.

– Quantitative: availability tests

– Qualitative: feedback forms, usability, heuristics, staff feedback
Triangulation – Example 2

Using multiple methods to explore effectiveness of relevance functionality.

– Quantitative: log analysis of use of facets to limit results

– Qualitative: training feedback, usability
Triangulation – Example 3

Using multiple methods to judge patron and staff perspectives on the product overall and identify specific aspects seen as valuable by users and staff.

– Quantitative: log analysis

– Qualitative: scenario-based usability, staff and user surveys
Triangulation – Example 4

Using multiple methods to begin to judge the impact of the discovery tool on the use of library resources and services.

- Quantitative: Vendor data on product full text views, link resolver clickthroughs, Google Analytics data on source of referrals to library-created content, ILL cancellation analysis

- Qualitative: feedback, usability (future)
Synthesis and plan for year two

Expectation 1: that Summon would result in increase in use of library resources.

**proof pending**

Benchmark

Continue year one assessment with use data

Expand examination with qualitative methods
Synthesis and plan for year two

Expectation 2: that Summon would be easy to use

**found

Spot check

Test changes in product for ease of use
Synthesis and plan for year two

Expectation 3: that Summon would produce relevant results

**mixed

Monitor use of facets

Assess user training for improvements in effective searching

Survey for student perception of relevance
Conclusion

• Value of multiple streams of feedback: Robust basis on which to evaluate and plan
  – Confirm
  – Challenge
  – Compliment

Questions?