Lead Users: A Predictive Framework

ARL Assessment Conference
“The future is already here. It’s just not evenly distributed.”
- William Gibson
Context on How Libraries (and Georgia Tech’s Libraries) are changing.
context

As we began the project, we identified the key future directions for Georgia Tech’s Library and used these to focus the research and strategy.

1. Positioning the library is primarily digital, and secondarily physical
2. Connecting users to the universe of information, not just Georgia Tech
3. Creating a more porous library, with more ways in and out of the spaces
4. Pulling in beginning users and pushing out services to advanced users
5. Earlier and longer involvement in the research process, with broader expertise
6. Increasing awareness of services and showcasing work
**context**

As we began the project, we crafted Georgia Tech’s Library future vision and used it to focus the development of space and service concepts.

**Georgia Tech Library will define the technological research library of the 21st century.**

We will enable people to **explore the past** and **design the future** by bringing together **inspirational spaces**, **curated content**, **expert guidance**, and **scholarly communities**.

**Library Vision**

A network for discovering and retrieving (living) information. A “launching pad” for turning information into knowledge, advancing ideas, and experimenting.

Showcase physical and digital content and activity by and at Tech.

Help people carry out their visions and proactively uncover needs. The Library is not just about its spaces and collections, but is driven by its people and their expertise and knowledge.

Bring people together from across campus to share and collaborate. Connect them to communities around the world.

Inspire users to create new scholarship and allude to “what’s next.”
What's your preferred method to predict the future? (Pick 1)

- Look at data trends
- Ask an outside expert
- Look beyond your industry
- Talk to your users and staff
- Get out a crystal ball
- Other?

Respond at PollEv.com/brightspot  Text BRIGHTSPOT to 22333 once to join, then A, B, C, D, E...

Our hypothesis and methodology: Research and engage lead users to predict future space and service needs.
hypothesis: lead users predict the future

Eric Von Hippel discovered that many innovations are created by users themselves.
hypothesis cont’d: lead users predict the future

Everett Rogers identified how ideas are adopted across different segments and why.

Internally motivated to change

Inspired by the new & influenced by the media

Adopt if practical and has been successful in practice

Jumps in when sees “everybody” is doing it

Waits until forced to adopt

4. Diffusion of Innovations, Fifth Edition

EVERETT M. ROGERS

Georgia Tech Library | brightspot
methodology

Our process engaged lead users to co-create ideas for future spaces and services.

1. Identify lead users
2. Engage them through interviews, workshops and shadowing
3. Identify their existing workarounds and innovations as well unmet needs
4. Compare their behaviors to how other users are trending
5. Create concepts based in lead users ideas and new ones to meet their needs
How we applied this on the Library Renewal Project
identifying lead users

We identified lead users by canvassing library faculty and staff who were working with them as well as utilizing existing faculty, graduate, and undergraduate advisory groups.
engaging lead users

We engaged lead users through surveys, workshops, interviews, shadowing, and journaling activities. Then we synthesized findings with them in a workshop.
understanding experience

We created an experience model that identified the five key components of the library experience, using it to evaluate the current and envision the future.

**User Experience Model**

- **DISCOVERING**: Finding the right information, content, people, and tools
- **FOCUSING**: Filtering information and identifying what’s next
- **GROWING**: Mastering new skills and building relationships
- **CREATING**: Expressing and applying ideas
- **SHOWCASING**: Testing and sharing back with the community
What we found.

(awesome stuff)
Discover: Digital Media & Scholarship Collaborative

We found that users are looking for a technology-rich destination to engage in digital scholarship, broadly considered.

Undergrad Lead User Persona
Advisory board member, works visualizing chemical engineering research

Inspiration: Visualization Wall

Collaborative Rendering (BNIM Architects)
Focus: Expert Consultation Center

We found that students and faculty alike are looking for subject matter expertise as well as knowledgeable guides to help them through administrative research processes.

Grad Student Lead User Persona
Design student who is extensive user of electronic and print materials

Inspiration: Walgreen’s

Consult Center Rendering (BNIM Architects)
Grow: Teaching Studio

We found that campus needed a neutral space to design, develop and test emerging pedagogical practices.

Roberta Berry
Professor of Public Policy,
Problem-Based Learning courses

Inspiration: Learning Studio
Create: Innovation & Ideation Studio

We found that users are looking for a low-tech space with flexible furniture and supplies to help them explore, visualize, and create “messy” models of their ideas.

Chris Reaves
Director of Student Innovation Programs

Innovation Prizes

Studio Rendering (BNIM Architects)
Showcase: Scholars Event Network

We found that people like Hugh needed places to showcase work of all shapes and sizes and to talk about what they made. So, we created a network of scholarly event spaces.

Hugh Crawford
Professor of Literature, Media and Communication

Tree house project

Event Space Rendering (BNIM Architects)
Thank you!

Further questions?

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