A Game-Based Multimedia Approach to Library Orientation

LOEX Conference
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Overview
The Ohio State University Libraries’ Instruction Office, in collaboration with the Office of First Year Experience and the Office of Undergraduate Studies, has developed an online game to orient all new first year students to the University Libraries prior to their arrival on campus. Through an interactive campus map, eight casual games, and five short videos, new students can become familiar with (and hopefully more willing to use) library locations, collections, services, tools, and people in the Ohio State library system.

Design Team
The developers of the game consisted of three instruction librarians, one part-time graduate student, and one part-time student programmer.

Timeline
The Design Team had one year to develop the project. Key elements for exploration during this period included a survey of new students about their library perceptions and usage, investigation other games and library orientation projects, discussion of issues with on- and off-campus experts, creating content and design, and extensive usability testing.

Student Perceptions Survey
In October 2006 the Design Team created and administered a survey to a sample of first quarter students regarding their knowledge and use of the Libraries during their first weeks at the University. Data from this survey will be used for comparison with data from the same survey to be administered in October 2007 to new students who have experienced the orientation game.

Software
- Google Map API, to build the interactive game board.
- Hot Potatoes (freeware), to develop casual game prototypes.
- Captivate/Flash, to create several games/movies.

Funding
The Director of Libraries funded the entire development of this project including the purchase of multimedia software, all survey costs, and the wages for both the part-time graduate assistant and the short-term undergraduate student programmer.
“Head Case: The Game”

http://library.osu.edu/sites/fye/
(Game available late summer 2007)

Games

Clickzone: Explore the Libraries’ Web site to answer a series of questions.

Close to Dorms: Put this jigsaw puzzle together to reveal a map showing which libraries are closest to your dorm.

Database Match: Match a database title with its description.

LC Call Number Order: Put all the books on the shelf by LC call number.

Libwords: Complete this crossword puzzle to “come to terms with terms” used in the University Libraries.

Library Superstars: Match pictures of famous (and not so famous) library folks with their description

Multiple Guess: Answer multiple choice questions that all relate to circulation benefits, services, and policies.

Way/No Way: Work through a series of true/false questions about the University Libraries’ collections and services.

Movies

Renovation Slideshow: Photos and text show students about our Main Library renovation project.

Cartoon Research Library: Archivist shows and talks about our huge San Francisco Cartoon Collection.

Libstories: Students tell how the University Libraries have been meaningful and helpful to them.

Director’s Welcome: The Director of Libraries encourages new students to come for study, research, leisure reading, and computers.

Learning Commons: Student tells about the technology and assistance in our new learning commons.

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