From Desk to Web: Building the Reference Desk into Online Space By Jerilyn Veldof and Janet Fransen, *April 29, 2009*

Personas and User Tasks

Public Library Group

Your Persona

You're a parent of a teenager and second grader and the owner of a floral business. You're comfortable navigating the Web and pretty good at searching using Google. But you've never heard of a library database and only recently became aware that you can get online access to things like Consumer Reports rather than by going into the library. You've never tried to do this before.

Usability Tasks

Given access to the library's website:

- Task 1: Find an article that will help you better advertise your business.
- Task 2: Find a book that will help you discipline your teenager.
- Task 3: Find an online version of Consumer Reports so you can look up ratings on new cars.
- Task 4: Find this article, which is not freely available on Google:

Wilcox, Juli. "At Home on the Grasslands." South Dakota Magazine 22.6 (2007): 32-37.

- Task 5: Find out when your library books are due and then renew them.
- Task 6: See what kind of library-sponsored activities are available for your second grader this summer. How much do they cost and how do you sign up?

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Personas and User Tasks

K-12 Group

Your Persona

You're a 9th grader with six demanding teachers this year. You have Web access at home, but unfortunately neither of your parents is a librarian so if your teachers don't give you time in the media center, you have to find what you need on your own. You got through your middle school reports and papers by checking books out of the library and reading Wikipedia. But this year you don't have time to spend hours at the library—you need to know what shelf to go to when you walk in the door. And your teachers don't think Wikipedia is a good enough resource for high school papers.

Usability Tasks

Given access to the library's website:

- Task 1: Your biology teacher wants you to come to class prepared to discuss the executive order about stem cells that President Obama signed on March 9, 2009. Find a magazine article that explains the order.
- Task 2: Your theater teacher wants you to choose and memorize a monologue. Find a book of monologues in either your school's media center or your closest public library.
- Task 3: Your Geography class is doing a project on the United Nations and everyone has to represent a country. You got Kazhakstan. Find a website that will give you facts about Kazhakstan's government, economy, people, and physical geography that your teacher will accept.
- Task 4: You want to find this article, and it's not freely available on Google:
 - Somalia's Parliament Votes to Reject New Government. (1964, July 15). New York Times, p. 9.
- Task 5: Find out when your library books are due and then renew them.
- Task 6: Your English class is reading <u>In the Time of the Butterflies</u> by Julie Alvarez and you need to find a critical review of the novel. Where would you look?

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Personas and User Tasks

Academic Library Groups

Your Persona

Last year you graduated from your small high school in North Dakota. This year you are an undergraduate majoring in psychology and living in the dorm. You've always been a good student, but you are afraid that the college coursework will be over your head. You are shy and reserved, and mostly hang out with two of your high school friends who attend the same college. You use Facebook to keep in contact with your high school support network. This semester you have to write papers for your psychology and environmental sciences courses. Your psych professor says you need to use "scholarly" articles and books; your environmental sciences professor hasn't said what resources you're supposed to use. All you know is that you want to get the library part of these papers out of the way as quickly as possible.

- Task 1: During a class discussion, your professor recommended you use something at the library called PsycInfo when looking for articles. Find PsycInfo, explain what you think it is, and use it to find an article about teen pregnancy.
- Task 2: Your Dance instructor asked the class to read an article, but she only gave you part of the citation. Complete the citation and find the full text of the article:
 - Block, Betty A. (????). Using iPods in Dance Pedagogy. Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance, (????), 25-28.
- Task 3: Your math professor put a book of problem sets on reserve at the library. Use the library's website to figure out where to get the book and how long it can be checked out.
- Task 4: Find a book on affirmative action in the library, and cite it using APA style for your bibliography.
- Task 5: You'd like to find a good library to study in that's as close as possible to your last class of the day. Find the closest library, and their hours of operation.
- Task 6: You'd like to read the book *The Billionaire's Vinegar: The Mystery of the World's Most Expensive Bottle of Wine*. Find out if your library has this book. If it isn't available, place a request to have the library get it for you.