Empathy Map

A Glimpse Into the ABQ Public Library Website
https://abq.ent.sirsi.net/client/en_US/default

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Week 11, Empathy Mapping

Who is Your User?

Empathy Map Audience:

- This empathy map focuses on a traditional library patron with limited experience using the website.

- The user is a retired female **senior citizen** who enjoys reading, cooking, walking, and spending time with friends, as well as exploring art and culture. She stays informed about current events and values her family connections. She fits one of the primary audiences for a user of the library as she is a frequent visitor to the physical library, where she seeks resources and community engagement.

- Typically, she visits her local physical library location once a month to check out books and use the copier. During these visits, she enjoys engaging with librarians, asking them for latest book recommendations, running database searches, and getting assistance with reserving or checking out materials.

- Although she has access to the internet at home and uses an iPad, she rarely visits the library's website. When she does, it's usually to find the library's hours of operation or contact information to call the local branch and speak with a librarian about holding a book.

- She primarily looks for specific authors and their new releases, as well as suggestions for new books to read.

Primary Audiences:

Users of a library website encompass a diverse range of individuals, including students, professionals, families, and **senior citizens**. Students often seek academic resources, research materials, and event information related to their studies. Professionals may look for industry-related publications and networking opportunities, while families often search for children's programs, educational resources, and community events. Senior citizens, like retired individuals, typically seek book recommendations, access to newsletters, and information on local events.

Think

I might want to know what Ask Us is all about, FAQ and general information is helpful, then hours and locations and this is helpful because she likes to go onsite a lot.

She found some things she thought would interest her in coming back to the website such as events she would like to attend such as a journaling club, or a walking group, or coffee and conversations. She liked the Newsletter by genre section detailing current books in those categories that she might like to read, and she also liked the printable event guide.

Hear

The user has heard from friends that the smaller library may not have all the resources she needs but can request materials from larger libraries.

She's heard about community events but does not typically attend them. Although, after browsing the Printable Event Guide and Events by Category under the Adult section, she might use the website more.

She appreciates hearing recommendations from the library staff, who help both in-person and over the phone.

See

Initially, she quickly scanned the homepage and was immediately drawn to the catalogs and events sections. She appreciated seeing the scrolling items and the ability to click through for more information. When she noticed the search bar, she attempted a keyword search for "romance book." However, she was overwhelmed by the thousands of search results that she saw. Lacking familiarity with the faceted search options, she tried using the sort dropdown by author, but this did not effectively narrow her choices. She liked seeing the book cover pictures next to the book descriptions in the newsletter and liked seeing the correlating images with each event description.

Feels

She feels that visiting the library in person offers a more interactive experience, as it allows her to engage directly with librarians who can assist her with her needs. However, after exploring the website, she feels that it has a wealth of resources to offer. She feels like there is potential for discovering information that a librarian might not have mentioned, enhancing her overall experience and providing her new ideas.

Pain

She experienced overwhelming search results when looking for specific books or searching by book genre. She had difficulty navigating the website especially under the main menu drop-downs and narrowing down search results using the facets, she also couldn't find an exact location for an event that appealed to her, leading to frustration. She still has preference for in-person interactions versus online browsing.

Gain

This user recently visited the ABQ Library website for the first time and discovered several features that piqued her interest in returning. She was particularly drawn to events such as a journaling club, a walking group, and coffee and conversation sessions. Additionally, she appreciated the "Newsletter by Genre" section, which highlights current books in categories she enjoys such as Mystery or Nature and Science. The availability of a printable event guide also appealed to her, enhancing her overall experience on the site.

What does the user see?

1 → **2** → **3** → **4** → **5**

1 Upon her first visit to the library website, the user quickly scans the homepage by scrolling top to bottom very quickly and is immediately drawn to the catalogs and events sections. She **sees** and likes the scrolling thumbnail features that allow her to click on items for detailed summaries.

2 When asked how would she attempt to search for a book on the website, she **sees** and clicks on Books and More > Interlibrary Loan but was frustrated by the results and went back to the home page and tried a keyword search within the search bar.

3 When attempting the keyword search for a book, she initially was overwhelmed by **seeing** the large number of results returned for the term "romance book." Although she does not notice the filter options at first, she tries sorting by author but still encounters too many choices, then clicks on the contemporary facet, leading her to consider calling the library for assistance instead.

4 While browsing the newsletter, she is intrigued by the titles and brief descriptions, drawn in by the appealing book covers. Although she encounters some confusion when prompted about how to open new tabs on her iPad, she appreciates the format of the newsletter and the limited selection it offers.

5 After reviewing the Newsletters nature and science category, she identifies a title, *Becoming Earth,* and **sees** the availability of three copies, which she finds reassuring. This information helps her feel more confident about contacting a librarian for additional recommendations if she finds a book of interest. Overall, the user's experience highlights both the potential and the challenges of navigating the library website.

What does the user hear?

The user often **hears** from friends and family that the smaller library may not have all the resources they need, but materials can be requested from larger libraries.

They also **hear** that there are community events hosted by the local library, although they typically do not attend these activities.

Information about events is often communicated through marketing materials displayed on bulletin boards within the library.

The user **hears** valuable recommendations and tips from library staff, which influence their visits.

When seeking assistance, they **hear** staff members are willing to conduct research and provide information while they are present at the library or on the phone.

The user appreciates the staff's willingness to help with printing services, including free color printing, as well as complimentary assistance with copying documents.

What does the user think and feel?

"Look, they have a journaling club!"

1 **2** **3** **4** **5**

1 — The user **thinks** that exploring the library's website can uncover activities and programs, such as a journaling club, that she might not discover through direct inquiries with librarians.

2 — She **feels** excited about the potential to find engaging opportunities, like coffee and conversation events or an adult walking group.

3 — However, her experience with the website often leaves her **feeling** frustrated and overwhelmed, especially when faced with excessive search results and complex navigation.

4 — She **feels** more at ease with the one-on-one interaction she receives in person.

5 — She **feels** less confident in navigating the online platform.

"It looks like they walk around the library."

"I like this Event!"

What does the user say and do?

Navigating Key Features of the Library Website
When using the library website, the user typically begins by exploring the "Books and More" section. She often wants to understand what the "Ask Us" feature entails and finds the FAQ and general information helpful. Knowing the library's hours and locations is particularly important to her since she enjoys visiting the library in person. Currently, she finds the "My Account" section unhelpful.

Exploring Research Features and Event Information
As she navigates to the "Research" section, she becomes curious about "Special Collections," which appears interesting. While scrolling through the content, she notices the "Speaker Series," which also captures her attention. After clicking on "Ever Changing Ever Growing," she seeks information about the events but feels overwhelmed by the numerous options available, making it difficult to locate specific events.

Seeking Assistance and Appreciating Curated Content
In such cases, she prefers to reach out to the "Ask Us" section and typically chooses to call for assistance. She appreciates the "Relevant Readings" feature on the page, especially the non-fiction cultural books.
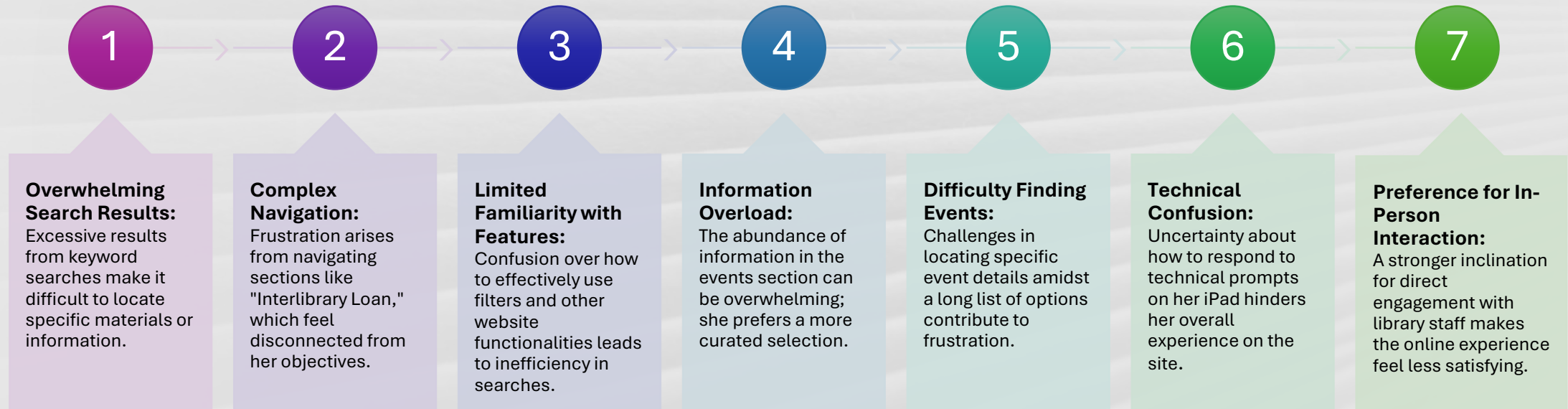
Challenges with Event Navigation and Information Overload
When viewing the events by category, she finds the extensive list overwhelming. She considers using the "Printable Event Guide" but is unsure how to access it. The volume of information can be daunting for her, as she prefers more concise options. However, she does find value in the pictures featured in the "Upcoming Events," particularly noting an adult walking group that piques her interest and suggests potential opportunities for other walking groups as well.

"I might want to know what Ask Us is all about."

What are the users' pains?

1

Overwhelming Search Results: Excessive results from keyword searches make it difficult to locate specific materials or information.

2

Complex Navigation: Frustration arises from navigating sections like "Interlibrary Loan," which feel disconnected from her objectives.

3

Limited Familiarity with Features: Confusion over how to effectively use filters and other website functionalities leads to inefficiency in searches.

4

Information Overload: The abundance of information in the events section can be overwhelming; she prefers a more curated selection.

5

Difficulty Finding Events: Challenges in locating specific event details amidst a long list of options contribute to frustration.

6

Technical Confusion: Uncertainty about how to respond to technical prompts on her iPad hinders her overall experience on the site.

7

Preference for In-Person Interaction: A stronger inclination for direct engagement with library staff makes the online experience feel less satisfying.

What are the users' gains?

Importance of In-Person Assistance at the Library
The user values the physical library location for its accessibility and the personalized assistance she receives, which helps her navigate the available resources more effectively.

Discovering Opportunities Through the Library Website
Exploring the library's website reveals activities and programs, such as a journaling club, that she might not have found through direct inquiries with librarians. This also leads her to other engaging opportunities, like coffee and conversation events.

Value of Visual Elements on the Library Website
Additionally, she appreciates the visual elements on the website, noting how the images correspond to specific subjects, such as knitting or photography, even if those topics do not interest her.

Enhancing User Experience Through Visual Alignment
This visual alignment enhances her overall experience and makes it easier to identify programs that align with her interests.

Summary/Synthesis of Materials in Syllabus

- **How Empathy Mapping Enhances UX Decision-Making and Aligns Teams**
  This week, I gained a deeper understanding of the importance of Empathy Mapping in comprehending the audience for a product or website. The readings emphasized that empathy maps are valuable tools for visualizing user attitudes and behaviors, helping align the UX team with user insights and identifying gaps in existing data. These maps facilitate a shared understanding and play a crucial role in decision-making.

- **Key Elements to Understand User Thoughts, Feelings, and Goals**
  An empathy map typically consists of quadrants that focus on what the user *thinks*, *sees*, *feels*, and *hears*. Variations of this structure may include categories like *says*, *thinks*, *feels*, and *does*, or combine elements such as *thinks and feels* or *says and does*. Additionally, there is often a section dedicated to *pains* and *gains*, which explores the user's challenges, frustrations, and obstacles, as well as their aspirations and goals.

- **Establishing Focus, Scope, and Goals Before Creating an Empathy Map**
  Before creating an empathy map, it's important to establish focus, scope, and goals. This involves determining the specific user persona you're collecting data on and clarifying the primary objectives of the empathy mapping exercise, including any desired outcomes. Research methods to gather insights can include user interviews, field studies, listening sessions, surveys, and more.

- **Gathering Insights Through Think-Aloud Methods and Synthesizing User Feedback**
  During the research process, it can be helpful to not only observe, but to ask the user to think aloud as they interact with the product, capturing their thoughts under each relevant category. You should encourage the participant to share their perspective on the experience, paying attention to any shifts in their views of the product. Once you have collected the data, it's essential to synthesize the information and share your findings.

- **Adapting to Challenges in Empathy Mapping**
  In my own application of empathy mapping, I focused on a key audience segment—senior citizens. Initially, I attempted to conduct a Zoom interview but encountered technical difficulties when the participant was unable to share their screen. I quickly adapted by asking them to exit the Zoom meeting and access the website directly through their browser. Using a set of guiding questions as a reference point, I encouraged the participant to think aloud as they navigated the site. While I would have preferred to see their screen, I managed to follow along with their verbal explanations. I was able to gauge their emotional reactions through their vocal cues, noting both moments of frustration and excitement. Some of the questions I used can be found on the next page.

Empathy Map Interview Questions

1. **Who are the users?**
   Can you tell me about yourself (age, occupation, interests)?
   How often do you visit the library, and what brings you here?

2. **What are users' goals?**
   What do you typically hope to achieve when you visit the library website?
   Are there particular resources or information you frequently look for?

3. **What do users think and feel?**
   Have you ever used the library website before?
   What are your primary motivations for visiting the library website?

4. **What do users hear?**
   What have you heard from friends or family about the library and its resources?
   Have you received any recommendations or tips from library staff that influenced your visits?

5. **What do users see?**
   What stands out to you when you first visit the library website?
   You want to start your search over again, what are you going to do? – Impromptu question

6. **What do users say and do?**
   What questions do you usually ask when using the library website?

7. **What are users' pain points?**
   What difficulties do you encounter when navigating the library website?
   Is there anything specific that makes it hard for you to find what you're looking for?

8. **What influences users' decisions?**
   What factors do you consider when choosing the library as a resource?
   How do library events or programs affect your decision to visit or use the website?