Executive Summary

In the summer of 2014, the J. Murrey Atkins Library’s Usability Lab conducted a study of the library’s catalog. The study focused on two versions of the library catalog: the current WorldCat Local instance, designated Alpha and a WorldCat Discovery Beta instance, a test environment only available to library staff. Atkins Library uses OCLC’s WorldCat catalog as the primary portal to the library’s electronic and print collections. The objectives for the WorldCat catalog’s Alpha and Beta study are as follows:

- Conduct a usability assessment of both the Alpha and Beta catalog.
- Conduct a comparative analysis of the design and functional features of the Alpha and Beta catalog.
- Determine whether the library should implement the new Beta catalog or remain on WorldCat Local.

The Alpha and Beta study consisted of eighteen participants that represented undergraduate students, graduate students, and non-library staff. The initial four tests were conducted prior to the development of a task list and were therefore dropped early in the study. The data from the remaining fourteen participants were used to write this report. Of the fourteen, six participants were tasked to test the Alpha catalog interface and eight on the Beta catalog interface. The fourteen participants were asked to perform eight identical tasks on either the Alpha or Beta interface. This assessment method is the most effective way to uncover usability issues as it consists of representative users conducting relevant tasks while using the interfaces. The only exception was the Beta interface which allowed for an additional ninth task, further detailed under the study design in this report. The task list used in this study focused on: locating a DVD, locating a book in a different language, locating an eBook, locating an article, finding where a book is located in the library, locating a publisher, and adding items to a list. Resulting data was analyzed and interpreted to identify usability issues and their underlying causes.

The majority of the participants completed the tasks with little difficulty. This is particularly noteworthy considering that none of the participants had any exposure to the Beta catalog before testing, whereas the Alpha participants had some degree of experience with WorldCat Local prior to testing. Feedback was largely positive with minor recommendations.

While no critical usability issues (problems that made the site unusable or negatively affect its efficiency for multiple users), were uncovered, the study revealed minor issues. This report
contains a list of recommendations to address these issues. Additionally, the results suggested further possibilities of inquiry for future studies.

Background

The electronic catalog is used by students, faculty, staff, and community patrons. The catalog is used to locate electronic, print, and multimedia resources. The current WorldCat Local (Alpha) catalog is accessible on and off campus and prominently linked off the main library homepage. WorldCat.org is freely available worldwide; Atkins local instance is customized with the library’s branding and resources. This local catalog designated Alpha in this study is accessed remotely with the university’s NinerNet login.

In the spring of 2014, an ENGL 4181/5181 Writing User Documents class completed a class project. ENGL 4181/5181 comprised of graduate and undergraduate students who have no usability experience. The students of ENGL 4181/5181 were required to produce detailed documentation for a specific system. The library’s current catalog (Alpha) became a focus for the spring 2014 technical writing class. The outcome of this class project included final reports and tutorials. The tutorials created by the students focused on search methods for undergraduate students, graduate students, staff, and faculty. The tutorials did not focus on the usability of the catalog but instead focused on redirecting users to discipline specific databases. As a result, a usability project was planned the following summer.

A Usability Study of OCLC’s WorldCat Catalogs began in June 2014. The study included the current live catalog designated "Alpha" by the Usability Team and OCLC’s newly designed WorldCat Discovery "Beta" catalog which was released in April. The summer project consisted of the Associate Professor for Anthropological Research, the Head of Research & Information Services and the Usability Team which included the Director of the Usability Lab and Digital Scholarship Librarian, and three temporary student assistants.

Tasks-based usability analysis was the methodology used in this study. This form of usability testing allows for accurate and comparable data analysis between multiple systems, in this case the Alpha and Beta catalog. In addition, the method is a reliable way of gauging usability at any stage of development.

Study Design

The tasks analysis helps researchers uncover usability issues as users interact with an interface via predefined tasks. Participants in this study attempted eight predefined tasks on the Alpha interface and nine predefined tasks on the Beta interface (Shown Below). The Beta catalog interface warranted an additional ninth task. The addition did not affect the previous eight tasks. The Associate Professor for Anthropological Research provided a list of potential topics to test. The Director of the Usability Lab and the current Usability Assistant developed and finalized the task list in this study. The final task list highlights typical activities performed by students, staff,
and faculty when using the library catalog. Using one task list to test two different systems allowed the researchers to conduct a comparative analysis of the data collected.

The tasks asked participants to:

1. Locate *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince* on DVD from the Atkins Library. Is it available for checkout?
   - You see other DVDs of interest; add the first 5 items from the search result to your list.
3. Locate the eBook version of Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* published by Christian Classics Ethereal Library.
5. Find what floor in the library Lawrence Lessig’s book, *Free Culture: how big media uses technology and the law to lock down culture and control creativity* is located and what is its call number.
6. Add the eBook version of *Kim* by Rudyard Kipling to your list.
7. Locate the book *Steve Jobs* by Walter Isaacson. *(Facilitator: ask if the book is checked out, when is due back, and what will they do if they need this item quickly)*
8. Find what journal the article, *Do as I say (Not as I do): Inconsistency Between Behavior and Values* is published in.
9. Review the accumulated list and then email it to your UNC Charlotte account.*

*Beta Only.

Participant’s performances as they attempt to complete the tasks expose usability issues and inform recommendations. During the test session, participants were encouraged to articulate their thoughts and actions out loud as they worked through the tasks. The think out loud protocol allows researchers to understand the context for user actions and decisions while completing a specific task; making it easier for the researchers to determine the underlying causes of usability issues.

In addition to the task list, participants completed a pre-test survey *(see Appendix)*. The pre-test survey captured demographic information, including year in school, major/field of study, frequency of catalog use, and an explanation of use.

The test sessions ranged from 12-30 minutes and involved a test facilitator, observer/note taker, and the participant. Two student assistants acted as the facilitator and the observer. Both were trained by the Usability Director. The facilitator greeted participants upon arrival, guided participants through the informed consent, presented the participants with the tasks, answered
participant’s questions, and prompted the participants for responses. The observer took notes during the sessions and analyzed the data produced.

The test was conducted on a Dell desktop computer running Morae Recorder. Morae Recorder captures the desktop activities and the participants’ facial expressions via a web camera. The pre-survey was added to Morae by the facilitator. Once launched, Morae delivered the pre-survey and begin recording the participant’s interaction with the interface. Following test completion, the data was compiled and analyzed as a whole and per individual.

**Recruitment**

Participants were recruited through library’s social media accounts and posters placed throughout the building. The posters signage advertised:

“$5 Starbucks gift card
Help beta-test the new Atkins online library catalog and receive a $5 Starbucks gift card.”

In addition, the posters provided contact information for potential participants.

Eighteen participants took part in the study. The initial four tests were conducted prior to the development of a task list and were therefore purged early in the study to maintain data integrity. The remaining fourteen participants read and signed an informed consent form approved by the university’s Institutional Review Board. Participants received a $5 Starbucks gift card for their participation in the study. Participants received the incentive regardless of whether they successfully or unsuccessfully completed the usability test.

**Participant Demographics**

The participants consisted of 10 undergraduate students, 1 graduate student, and 3 non-library staff. The undergraduate and graduate students represented 12 different areas of study. The user’s prior experience with the interface varied from using several times a week, several times a month, several times a semester, to never.

**Findings**

Findings are grouped by the individual task along with a description of the success rate, ease of completion, errors, and participant comments for both the Alpha and Beta interfaces.

**Task 1: Locate Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince on DVD from the Atkins Library. Is it available for checkout?**

- You see other DVDs of interest; add the first 5 items from the search result to your list.
The task was designed to determine if users could locate a specific DVD on either the Alpha or Beta interfaces. Nine of the fourteen participants completed this task with ease. All of the users completed the task successfully. To complete this task, participants must demonstrate a successful search technique that results in locating the specified DVD. This task requires the participants to complete multiple steps, first to locate the DVD, then to add the item along with similar items to a list. The Alpha participants went through the process of adding items to a list, but could not complete the task because they were prompted to create a separate WorldCat account in order to use the feature. Five Beta participants were misdirected when attempting to add items to their list due to a non-functional widget.

**Alpha**

All six participants began their search using the same technique. The first step in their process was searching by title, “*Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*” in the general search. All of the participants successfully completed Task 1 (*Figure 1.1*).

![Figure 1.1](image)

The next step was split in half; three participants found the DVD option listed second on the results page while the other three participants overlooked the second item in the result list and used the left side filter to refine the format to DVD.

After locating the item, the participants were asked to add the first 5 items from the search results to their list. Two approaches were taken for this step. Four participants remained on the results page and checked the box for the items and clicked the “Save to: New List” option in the drop-down menu (*Figure 1.2*). Then they were directed to the WorldCat login screen to register (*Figure 1.3*). Three participants who utilized the second approach clicked on the individual items. Once on the item record page, these participants clicked on the "Add to list" link on the top right corner of the screen (*Figure 1.4*). For each item, the participants were directed to the WorldCat login screen to use the feature. To complete the task, participants who opted for this approach took longer to click through each item record and back to the results page.
Figure 1.2

Figure 1.3
Several different approaches were taken to complete this task. Six participants began the task by searching for the title in the general search box. The six participants that used the general search box took several different pathways including: searching by title (*Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*), searching by title and DVD (*Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince DVD*), and using the autocomplete feature to search by title and DVD. The users that included “DVD” in the general search string found the item listed first on the result page while participants that searched by title alone had to use the left side filter to refine the results by DVD format. The remaining two participants chose the advanced search option (*Figure 1.5*) where they refined the search by title and format.
After locating the item, participants were asked to add the first five items from the search result to their list. All of the participants used the “add to my list” widget in the DVD’s item record. Four participants had difficulty adding other related items to their list. These participants tried to add related items by clicking the “add to list” widget found in the left pane (Figure 1.6). The participants determined the icon was inactive and then had to open each result individually to complete the task. Several participants expressed confusion at the inactive widget and questioned what the widget’s purpose was.

![Figure 1.6](image)

**Task 2: Locate the French version of Victor Hugo’s *Les Miserables* owned by UNC Charlotte Libraries.**

The task was designed to determine if users could locate an item in a specific language (French) when given the author and title and what steps they took to find the item. Thirteen of the fourteen participants completed the task with ease. All the participants successfully completed the task. To complete this task, participants must demonstrate a successful search technique that results in locating the specified book.

**Alpha**

All six of the participants searched by the title, “*Les Miserables*” in the general search. Four participants used the left side filter to refine the language to French and one participant browsed the item details to find the correct version. Five participants were able to locate the correct item through the item record which included the language and libraries that own the item. The participant that had trouble locating the specified item did not know that the item record contained language details. The participant used the “view all formats and languages” function within the item details (Figure 2.1) to determine the language and identify if the item was owned by UNC Charlotte libraries.
Beta

All eight participants searched “Les Miserables” in the general search bar. Seven participants used the left side filter to refine the language to French. Next, the seven participants had to click the item record and then click the description tab to find that the language was French (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2
Four of the seven participants commented that it would be beneficial if the language was visible on the item detail (Figure 2.3).

The remaining participant clicked the first item on the result list and then clicked the description tab within the item record to find that the language was French. All of the users found that the item was held by UNC Charlotte Libraries in the item record.

**Task 3: Locate the eBook version of Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* published by Christian Classics Ethereal Library.**

This task was designed to determine if users could locate a specific version of a book by the publisher. The task resulted in the most failure cases of the study. Eight out of the fourteen participants completed Task 3. None of the successful participants completed the task with ease. Participants spent an average time of 4 minutes to complete the task, which was significantly longer than any of the other tasks performed. To complete the task, participants must demonstrate a successful search technique that results in locating the specified book. Both the Alpha and Beta participants were successful in finding a book version of *Crime and Punishment*, but had difficulty in finding the specified version of the item.

**Alpha**

Three participants were successful and three participants were unsuccessful while attempting Task 3. The three participants that were successful began their search by title (*Crime and Punishment*). Each of the successful participants had to experiment with their search technique by adding or removing filters and by adding or removing search terms from the general search box before discovering a successful search. The search processes of the successful participants included:

- Using the left side filter to refine by eBook, author, and content (fiction). The participant then identified the publisher of the first result by its details on the results page.
- Using the left side filter to refine by eBook and author. The participant then added the name of the publisher alongside the title into the general search and found the specified
item listed fourth. The participant observed that the interface prefers certain search queries over others.

- Using the left side filter to refine by author and eBook. The participant then attempted to use the “view all formats and languages” feature and scrolled through three pages of results before trying a new search. The user then added the term “ethereal” from the publisher’s name into the search along with the title and author and found the item as the first result.

The three unsuccessful participants began their search by title (*Crime and Punishment*) or by author (*Fyodor Dostoyevsky*). Each of the unsuccessful participants examined the left side filter and the advanced search for a publisher filter. One participant changed their search in the general search box to the publisher’s name (*Christian Classics Ethereal Library*) and was unsuccessful due to an abundance of results. The three unsuccessful participants expressed frustration in their search and commented if they needed this specific item they would ask a librarian or look for it using an external method such as Google.

**Beta**

Six out of eight participants were successful and two participants were unsuccessful in completing Task 3. The two unsuccessful participants began their search by title (*Crime and Punishment*) in the general search box. They both used the left side filter to refine the results by author and eBook and still could not find the specified item. They then looked for a filter to refine by publisher in the left side filter and in the advanced search but were unsuccessful. The two participants spent between 4-6 minutes before deciding that they would ask a librarian or the information desk for help locating this item.

The six successful participants took several different approaches in their search strategy. The first step of the process included searching by title (*Crime and Punishment*) or searching by title and eBook (*Crime and Punishment* eBook). Five participants clicked the first item’s record and then clicked the description tab to view the publication information. The remaining successful participant added “Christian Classics” to their search before selecting the first result’s item record. Three participants noted that the publisher location is listed before the publisher name which caused confusion.


This task was designed to determine if users could locate an item by the citation information. To complete the task, participants could search by title, author, and/or journal. All participants completed the task successfully. During this task, numerous participants asked the facilitator questions about the citation such as: What is this?, What are numbers?, and What is in italics? The confusion to what is represented in a citation led six participants to begin their search process by only searching the author’s name.
**Alpha**
The six participants used several different search strategies to have a successful outcome which included searching by author, full title, or author and full title. The most efficient search method was to search by full title. Three of the six participants found searching just by author in the general search box produced too many results which led two of the participants to add a partial title or the full title to their previous search strategy. The one participant that was successful by searching by author used the left side filter to refine by article and publication date (2008). Two participants began their search by author and title in the general search box. The two participants found the specified item first on the results list. The remaining participant clicked the article tab on the home search page and searched by title. The participant found the specified item listed first on the results page.

**Beta**
The eight Beta participants began their search strategy by one of the following: author (Qureshi, Sajda), author and partial title (Sajda Qureshi Assessing the Effects of Information), title and last author last name (“Assessing the Effects of Information and Communication Technologies on Development” Qureshi), and advanced search by title and author’s name (“Assessing the Effects of Information and Communication Technologies on Development,” Sajda Qureshi). Five participants began their process by searching for the author’s name. All five of the participants had to use alternative search techniques to narrow the results further. These included using the left side filter to refine by article and author or adding more information to the general search such as the full title or a partial title along with the author’s name. The remaining three participants incorporated the full title or partial title with the author’s name. All three of the participants found the specified item as the first result.

**Task 5: Find what floor in the library Lawrence Lessig’s book, Free Culture: how big media uses technology and the law to lock down culture and control creativity is located and what is its call number.**

The task was designed to determine if users could locate a specific book and use the interface to determine the item’s call number and location within the library. All participants completed the task successfully. To complete this task, participants must demonstrate a successful search technique that results in locating the specific book. This task requires the participants to complete multiple steps, first locating the specified book, then to identify the book’s call number and location within the library. Three participants asked the facilitator what a call number was before beginning the task.

**Alpha**
The six participants used the following methods to begin their search process in the general search box: author (Lawrence Lessig), title (Free Culture: how big media uses technology and the law to lock down culture and control creativity), and Boolean searches (title and author, partial title and author). Each participant found the specified item as the first result. Four participants clicked the item record and found the call number and location of the book under
“Find a copy in the library” (Figure 3.1) The remaining two participants clicked the availability tab in the item detail to determine the call number and location of the book (Figure 3.2).

![Figure 3.1](image1)

![Figure 3.2](image2)

**Beta**

The eight participants used the following methods to begin the search process in the general search box: author (Lawrence Lessig), title (*Free Culture: how big media uses technology and the law to lock down culture and control creativity*), and Boolean combinations (title and author or partial title and author). Each participant found the specified item as the first result. To determine the call number and the location of the book, the participants clicked the item record and then clicked the availability tab.

**Task 6: Add the eBook version of *Kim* by Rudyard Kipling to your list.**

The task was designed to determine if users could locate a specific eBook and add it to their list. Thirteen out of fourteen participants completed the task successfully. To complete this task, participants must demonstrate a successful search technique that results in locating the specified eBook. This task requires the participants to complete multiple steps, first to locate the DVD, then to add the item to their list that they began in Task 1. The Alpha participants went through the process of adding the specified item to their list, but could not complete the task because they were prompted to create a WorldCat account to use the feature.
**Alpha**
Several different search methods were used to complete Task 6. Four participants searched by title and author. Three of those participants used the left side filter to refine by eBook format and found the specified item listed first. The other participant could not locate an eBook version; they did not attempt to use the left side filter or any other tools before giving up on the search. The remaining two participants used the advanced search to search by author, title, and eBook format. The two participants that used the advanced search found the specified item listed first on the results page. The five successful participants selected the “add to list” widget found on the item record. The participants were then prompted to sign in to an existing account or to create an account with WorldCat to use the “add to list” tool.

**Beta**
Two different search methods were used to successfully complete Task 6. Five participants searched “Kim by Rudyard Kipling” in the general search box. After the initial search, the five participants took different approaches to locate the eBook, such as using the left side filter to refine by format (eBook), looking through the results, and using the “view all editions and formats” tool. The remaining three participants searched by author (Rudyard Kipling) in the general search box and the used the left side filter to refine the format to eBook. After all of the participants located the specified item they clicked the item record and then clicked the “add to my list” widget in the upper right corner.

**Task 7: Locate the book Steve Jobs by Walter Isaacson. (Facilitator: ask if the book is checked out, when it’s due back, and what will they do if they need this item quickly)**

This task was designed to determine how users would locate a specific book. The facilitator prompted the participants to determine the items availability and when the item was due back. All participants completed the task successfully. To complete this task, participants must demonstrate a successful search technique that results in locating the specified book. This task requires the participants to complete multiple steps, first to locate the book, and then determine its availability.

*Note: The item was checked by a member of the Digital Scholarship Lab and was not due for several months. The facilitator asked the participant what they would do next if the item was needed ASAP.*

**Alpha**
Three participants searched by title and author (*Steve Jobs*, Walter Isaacson). The three participants found the specified item listed first on the results page. To view the availability, two participants clicked the item record and the other participant clicked the availability button in the item detail.

Two Participants searched by the title (*Steve Jobs*) and the remaining participant searched by author (Walter Isaacson); they all clicked the item record to determine its availability. Five participants commented that they would use Interlibrary Loan to locate another version of the
book and one participant commented that they would visit the public library or buy the book on Amazon or at Barnes and Noble.

**Beta**
Seven of the eight participants searched by title and author, *(Steve Jobs, Walter Isaacson)* in the general search box and the remaining participants used the advanced search to search by title and to filter the results to books. All of the participants found the specified item listed first on the results page. The eight Beta participants clicked the item record and then clicked the availability tab. After the participants determined that the item was unavailable they all noted they would look for the item as an eBook or request the item through Interlibrary Loan.

**Task 8: Find what journal the article, Do as I say (Not as I do): Inconsistency Between Behavior and Values is published in.**

This task was designed to see if users could determine the journal an article was published in when given the article title. Only one out of fourteen participants had a successful search strategy on their first attempt. All participants completed the task successfully. To complete this task, participants must demonstrate a successful search technique that results in locating the specified article. This task requires the participants to complete multiple steps, first to locate the article, then to determine the journal that published the specified article. Participants were given an abundance of irrelevant results when they searched by partial title.

**Alpha**
All six Alpha participants were unsuccessful on their first attempt. Each participant searched using a partial title such as “do as I say (not as I do)” in the general search box. Four out of the six participants used the left side filter to refine by article but were still given abundance of irrelevant results. The remaining two participants saw the abundance of results after their initial search and immediately determined that they needed to alter their search technique. All of the participants ended up searching the entire title to find the correct result. Five of the six participants searched by title in the general search and found the specified item listed first on the results page. The remaining participant clicked the article tab on the search homepage and searched by full title, the participant found the specified result listed first on the results page. To determine the journal the article was published in, five participants opened the item record and the remaining participant found the publication information on the item detail.

**Beta**
Even though all the participants completed Task 8 successfully, seven out of the eight participants were not successful on their first attempt. The seven unsuccessful participants initial search was by partial title such as “do as I say (not as I do),” which resulted in an abundance of irrelevant results. The seven participants altered their initial search to full title which listed the specified item as first on the results page. The remaining participant searched the full title *(Do as I say (Not as I do): Inconsistency Between Behavior and Values)* on their first attempt and found the specified item listed first on the results page. After locating the specified item, all of the
participants clicked the item record to determine the journal the article was published in. Five participants noted that the publication information did not stand out and that it did not have any indicator that it was the publication information (Figure 4.1).

**Do as I Say (Not as I Do): Inconsistency Between Behavior and Values.**

*by* Kate Sweeney, James A. Shepperd, Jennifer L. Howell

Article/Chapter 2012 | Peer-reviewed
Database: Academic Search Complete
Held by: [UNC Charlotte Libraries](https://library.unc.edu)

*Figure 4.1*

**Task 9: Review the accumulated list and then email it to your UNC Charlotte account. (Facilitator: just have them email the Beta site list)**

This task was designed to determine if users could access the accumulated list that they saved to throughout the test session. The Alpha participants were not asked to complete this task because they could not create a list or add to a list in previous tasks if they did not have or create a WorldCat account. All Beta participants completed the task successfully. This task requires the participants to complete multiple steps, first to locate their accumulated list, then to share it by email.

**Beta**

All eight participants clicked the “My List” located in the upper right corner. The users then proceeded to click the “share” drop-down widget and then click “email list” (Figure 5.1).
Next, the participants were prompted to enter the desired email recipient of their list and then click “Send email” (Figure 5.2).
Recommendations

The following recommendations were developed based on analysis of the data collected from the usability test recordings, pre-survey responses, and post-test comments from the participants. The study did not uncover any critical usability issues, but it did reveal smaller adjustments that could be made to improve the usability of both the Alpha and Beta interfaces.

The recommendations below are suggestions to make the Alpha and Beta interfaces more efficient, desirable, and functional to its users.

**Alpha**

1. **Merge the “Add to list” function with “My Library Account.”**
   To fully utilize the features of the Alpha catalog the “Add to list” function should correspond with “My Library Account.” While the “Add to list” function did not cause critical usability issues, participants of the Alpha interface were required to create a separate account through OCLC in order to add items to their list. Participants must create an additional account that is separate from the “My Library Account,” which uses the University’s NinerNet credentials. “My Library Account” allows users to request items within the library as well as Interlibrary Loan items. Merging the two accounts would increase interoperability, functionality, usage, and eliminate redundancy. This would allow users to login in using their NinerNet credentials and not have to create a separate account just for the list function. In addition, users could use their accumulated list and request all of their items at one time instead of requesting them individually at every stage of their search process.

2. **List the name of the publisher before the location.**
   While the order of publisher name and location were not the cause of critical usability issues, a fair amount of participants commented that they found the ordering confusing *(Figure 6.1)*. This indicates that users could potentially mix up the location of the publisher with the actual publisher name. Since the publisher’s information follows the Library of Congress Marc standards, an alternative solution is for OCLC to distinguish the field label: Location/Publisher:

![Figure 6.1](image-url)
3. **Add a tab to represent visual material on the library’s search box.**
   One participant commented while searching for a DVD that it would be convenient if it was a tab on the search homepage. Adding a tab for visual material or media would allow users to filter their results at the beginning of the search process. The participant who made the comment used the left side filter to refine the format to DVD during the task. Adding this tab will increase the efficiency of the interface for users that know the specific format they are searching for (Figure 6.2).

![Figure 6.2]

**Beta**

1. **Activate the “Add to my list” widget located in the left pane.**
   While the inactive “Add to my list” widget in the left pane did not cause critical usability issues, four of the eight Beta participants attempted to use the widget and were left with confusion if the items were available (Figure 7.1). In addition, participants were confused and frustrated that there was an inactive widget. To decrease confusion and frustration the “add to my list” widget in the left pane should be activated or removed entirely. If the widget was made active the efficiency and desirability of the interface would increase. Having the “add to my list” widget in the left pane allows users to add related search items to their list without taking an additional step to open the items individually.

![Figure 7.1]
2. **Add the availability, the language, and the publisher to the item detail**
   General information such as the availability, the language, and the publisher of an item should be included in the item detail. Including this information will increase the speed of a user’s search. Generally when a user is using the library’s catalog they are searching for material that can be used immediately to aid academic research or assignments therefore an item’s availability can influence what items the user will utilize. Having influential information in the item detail increases the interface’s efficiency. Currently on the Beta catalog, a user must click the item record and then click the correct tab to view an item’s availability, language, and publisher. The tabs within in the item record include Description, Holding Libraries, Editions & Formats, and Availability.

![Crime and punishment](image)

*Figure 7.2*

3. **Create a hierarchy in the advanced search option to increase readability.**
   The participants that used the advanced search had visual issues with the format drop-down (*Figure 7.3*). The format drop-down includes twenty three options. The options are listed alphabetically. The left side filter’s format section includes the same options as the advanced search but organizes the options into categories and lists the categories in hierarchically (*Figure 7.4*). The advanced search format drop-down can duplicate the design of the left side filter’s format section to increase the readability and to create consistency throughout the interface.
4. Label “Publisher:” or “Journal:” in the item detail and item record.
Unlike books, articles include the publisher in the item detail but it does not label what the information represents (Figure 7.5). Adding a “Publisher” or “Journal” label in the item detail will clarify what the information is.

Do as I Say (Not as I Do): Inconsistency Between Behavior and Values.
by Kate Sweeny, James A. Shepperd, Jennifer L. Howell

Database: Academic Search Complete
Hold by: UNC Charlotte Libraries

Within the item record there are several tabs to distribute the item information including: Description, Holding Libraries, Editions & Formats, and Availability. Four participants clicked the description tab to look for the publisher’s information like they previously did for books and could not locate it there. The information was only located in the item detail. To increase consistency of the interface, the publisher information should be included under the description tab as it appears for books. The description tab for articles included the ISSN, OCLC Number, and other databases (Figure 7.6) whereas a book description included the publisher, physical description, language, ISBN, OCLC Number, uniform title, subjects, and genres (Figure 7.7).
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**Figure 7.6**

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**Figure 7.7**
5. **Create filter tabs on the library’s homepage search box (Everything, Books Articles, Databases, and Journals).**

Creating filter tabs on the homepage search box will increase the efficiency and functionality of searches. Tabs will allow users to narrow their results at the beginning of their search process. Steve Krug’s *Don’t Make Me Think* argues that many sites have started using tabs for navigation because they are self-evident, they are hard to miss, and they are slick. Tabs are visually distinctive and add visual interest to web pages (Krug 80). The beta search homepage does not use any tabs (*Figure 7.8*). Adding the same tabs as the Alpha search homepage (Everything, Books, Articles, Databases, and Journals) would cover the most popular formats (*Figure 7.9*). The additions of these tabs could have been helpful in eight out of the nine tasks in the study. The tabs would have not benefited Task 1 because there is not a tab to represent visual material, leaving the participants to use the “Everything” tab which is the same as using the general search box. For the other tasks, participants could have chosen the tab that correlated to the specified item they were attempting to locate. Adding the tabs does not determine that they will be constantly used, but it does provide the users with another useful tool to aid their searches.

*Figure 7.8*

*Figure 7.9*
Conclusions

Even though the study did not uncover any critical usability issues in either catalog, the study supports that Atkins should migrate from WorldCat Local (Alpha) to WorldCat Discovery (Beta) as soon as it becomes available for implementation. This recommendation comes with the understanding that the future design of the WorldCat Discovery prototype might change.

While this report was being compiled, WorldCat Discovery was updated. The update made the “add to my list” widget in the left pane active which was the first recommendation. In addition, the update added the item’s availability, the item’s location within the library, and the item’s call number to the item detail. The update did not tackle all of the recommendations made in this report, but demonstrated that modifications can be made to further increase the functionality, efficiency, and desirability of the catalog.

The intuitive nature of WorldCat Discovery will offset potential issues that may arise due to implementing a system in the middle of a semester. Faculty, staff, and students have become accustomed to frequent interface updates therefore implementing WorldCat Discovery (Beta) midterm will have little effect on academic performance.

If the library continues to use OCLC’s services, usability testing should be conducted on a regular basis.
References

Appendix

Task List

Task 1: Locate *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince* on DVD from the Atkins Library. Is it available for checkout?
  - You see other DVDs of interest; add the first 5 items from the search result to your list. *(Facilitator: when the user reaches to sign-in/sign-up page on the current site stop them)*


Task 3: Locate the eBook version of Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* published by Christian Classics Ethereal Library.


Task 5: Find what floor in the library Lawrence Lessig’s book, *Free Culture: how big media uses technology and the law to lock down culture and control creativity* is located and what is its call number.

Task 6: Add the eBook version of *Kim* by Rudyard Kipling to your list.

Task 7: Locate the book *Steve Jobs* by Walter Isaacson. *(Facilitator: ask if the book is checked out, when is due back, and what will they do if they need this item quickly)*

Task 8: Find what journal the article, *Do as I say (Not as I do): Inconsistency Between Behavior and Values* is published in.

Task 9: Review the accumulated list and then email it to your UNC Charlotte account.*
*Beta Only.

Pre-Test Survey

1. What year are you in school?
   
   (A). Freshman  
   (B). Sophomore  
   (C). Junior  
   (D). Senior  
   (E). Graduate student  
   (F). Non-student  
2. What is your major?
3. How often do you use the library catalog?

(A). Never
(B). A few times a semester (2 or more)
(C). A few times a month (2 or more)
(D). A few times a week (2 or more)
(E). Daily

4. If you use the library catalog, please specify for what purpose do you use the library catalog for. If not, please ignore the question.