

Following is the chat dialog from the webinar, “Online Catalogs: Designing with Users in Mind”, held August 13, 2009. For readability, the comments have been categorized. Where noted, after the event OCLC provided responses to comments. Chat comments are being reviewed for possible use as additional input to further refinement of OCLC services. To protect confidentiality, participant names have been removed from the comments.

## Scope

From Participant to All Participants: Are these findings being implemented in [WorldCat.org](http://WorldCat.org) as well as First Search?

From Participant to All Participants: I didn't realize there would be so much emphasis on WorldCat.

From Participant to All Participants: Wish you'd had other systems than just WorldCat Local included in your data.

From Participant to All Participants: Presentation seemed to be limited to WorldCat and WorldCat Local. Presentation might have considered other discovery platforms.

From Participant to All Participants: Although it emphasized WorldCat, still much that is applicable to our local catalogs.

From Participant to All Participants: Could have used an overview at the beginning to remind me of the differences between [worldcat.org](http://worldcat.org), WorldCat Local, FirstSearch, and Connexion client.

OCLC comment: The “Online Catalogs: What Users and Librarians Want” study that I (Karen) reported on was intended to define a new WorldCat data quality program. However, many of our findings are generalizable to data quality programs supporting next generation online catalogs (e.g., those offering faceted browsing and enriched content) as well as integrated library system (ILS) staff clients. Those seeking to define requirements for improved catalog **data** (exposed in both end user and staff interfaces) may find our study helpful as a source of ideas or talking points. Similarly, while the intent of our usability studies, reported on by Christie, was to help us improve the end user experience with WorldCat.org and WorldCat Local, we believe some of those findings may be generalizable to other discovery interfaces as well.

Many other scholarly articles on the user experience with online catalogs (their interfaces and their underlying data) may be easily found by entering the query “usability user studies online catalogs library” in Google Scholar. This search turns up several seminal articles (like the Christine Borgman one) as well as more recent publications.

## Background information

From Participant to All Participants: Introduction was too long.

From Participant to All Participants: The intro, before you got to the important stuff, was too long.

From Participant to All Participants: Too much on the how and not enough on the what.

From Participant to All Participants: I was interested in results only; the set-up was too long.

From Participant to All Attendees: Would have preferred faster summary of results, with more time devoted to how OCLC will respond to them.

From Participant to All Participants: First part was too slow. Don't read the slides. And most of us understand what kinds of usability testing there are.

From Participant to All Participants: Presentation could have been more efficient -- keep it to an hour next time.

From Participant to All Participants: Loved the data.

From Participant to All Participants: Content at the end was most important

OCLC Comment: However, the essence of this webinar was to help librarians and library staff understand how to design an online catalog for their users. An essential part of this is not just explaining what research we've found, I thought, but also explaining the kinds of techniques that they can use in their libraries (at a relatively low cost) to understand what their users need and want out of an online catalog when it comes time to redesign or evaluate their current catalog. I expect that most people called in to hear about our findings rather than learning about doing their own research after reading these comments, which is what I had expected but not what I was hoping for.

OCLC Comment: I (Karen) expect people participated in our webinar for a lot of reasons. Some were more interested in how our studies applied to their own settings, others were interested in what OCLC had learned from their research and what they were doing about it. Would it be worth asking the participants why they attended?

## WorldCat.org surveys

From Participant to All Participants: Is that 80% of students or users that are looking specific items?

From Participant to All Participants: Were your stats saying '80% of all WorldCat searches are known item searches' just end users or did that include librarians?

OCLC Comment: All end users, not just students; no librarians.

From Participant to All Participants: What % of students were library students?

OCLC Comment: I (Christie) have a note to see if we collected the discipline of students, but I don't believe we did.

OCLC Comment: I (Karen) am certain that we did not collect the discipline of students in our pop-up survey on WorldCat.org.

From Participant to All Participants: It would still be interesting to know how many users of [worldcat.org](http://worldcat.org) are librarians compared to the other groups. Librarians are in fact important users of catalogs. How to account for that? It remains a dilemma.

From Participant to All Participants: How many? I'm sorry; I missed the % of librarians?

OCLC Comment: In our (Karen's team's) study, 32% of the respondents to the WorldCat.org pop-up survey identified themselves as librarians and library staff.

## Distinguishing library staff perspectives and needs from library user perspectives and needs

From Participant to All Participants: Regarding the survey that we took: What the user \*wants\* doesn't necessarily equal what the user \*needs\*. Equating the two is dangerous as it allows the inmates to run the asylum.

From Participant to All Participants: Great metaphor, Dana.

OCLC Comment: It is true, as a user researcher, you want to look carefully at what users actually say and translate that into what their goals and needs are based on what you've observed. While we are doing usability studies, we don't typically ask for design tips or opinions on our interfaces, we mostly observe behavior and listen to the user

think out loud and draw conclusions from what we observed and heard. This gives us great insight into what the user needs in the user interface so they can accomplish their tasks. With a small number of users (typically 5-8), we can capture approximately 80% of major usability issues in a test. However, what we don't want to do is make assumptions about what the user needs and wants without actually talking to a user.

OCLC Comment: We in the library profession really need to get over this mindset that "we know best" what the user needs, and it somehow doesn't matter what the user wants, or what his/her behavior and preferences tell us about what's important. Who are we making catalogs for, if not the communities we serve?

From Participant to All Participants: In terms of what catalogers do, some information that is not as important to end users is very important to technical services: acquisitions and cataloging, so a conflict that is not easy to resolve with changing cataloging practice.

OCLC Comment: The information presented in our webinar was to help us understand what users expect out of an online catalog today. While we understand that the catalog also has to support librarian staff job functions, we need to get an understanding of how we can enhance the data so that it also supports the patron searching the catalog now as well. It makes sense that to support the needs of two very different kinds of users (patron and librarian), that is probably best handled using two different user interfaces or applications.

OCLC Comment: Our (Karen's team's) study explicitly explored what users and librarians/staff want from the data underlying online catalog interfaces, and how those preferences differ. As we put it in the report: "Important differences exist between the catalog data quality priorities of end users and those who work in libraries. End users, librarians, and library staff approach library catalogs purposefully. When end users approach catalogs, they generally want to satisfy information needs; librarians and library staff generally have work assignments to carry out. The purpose to which catalog data is being put seems to be an important driver of differences in data quality priorities." We conclude "In a world of unlimited human and financial resources, a data quality program for a library's online catalog could meet all end users' needs and all librarian and staff needs. In a world of limited resources, library leaders must make choices, creatively deploy the resources they have, and balance competing data quality requirements. Striking the balance in favor of what end users want and need from online catalogs seems more likely to assure the library will continue to thrive in the end user communities it serves."

From Participant to All Participants: Are the users who are searching doing so because they prefer to or because they do not know how to browse?

OCLC Comment: I think there is still some expectation among some library staff that the systems and approaches users employ to find bibliographic data and get bibliographic items are or ought to be the same as the systems and approaches librarians use to

create data. I think a user-centered approach aims to change this view. "Users have their own perspectives." Librarians need and can use different systems for their own work.

OCLC Comment: I would add to my colleague's remark above that librarians need and can develop a more user-centered approach to setting catalog data quality priorities and making decisions about cataloging practices and policies.

From Participant to All Participants: Extremely helpful in seeing comparison between what librarians rank as important and what users rank as important.

From Participant to All Participants: The session helped me understand the differences when wearing my user hat and my librarian hat.

### Known item searching

From Participant to All Participants: If most searches are known item, why was the default searches for WorldCat Local all keyword?

From Participant to All Attendees: Several of us from Cornell second Linda Matson's question as well.

From Participant to All Participants: if OCLC knows that 80% of users are looking for a known title, then could OCLC consider allowing title phrase or exact title searching in WorldCat Local?

From Participant to All Participants: We second that comment about keyword default. The results can be very confusing & overwhelming to patrons.

From Participant to All Participants: Users are used to Google, which is keyword.

From Participant to All Participants: We still want to know why if 80% of users are looking for exact title it is not a search choice in WorldCat Local?

From Participant to All Participants: Wish you had talked about how this information has directly impacted WorldCat Local. For example, if users are doing known item searching, why did you have keyword only????

OCLC Comment: Our usability tests have demonstrated a strong preference for a "simple" keyword search box, even when test participants are looking for specific items for which they know the exact title.

OCLC Comment: There's an important distinction to make here: In our analysis, we stated that 80% of users are searching for known items, not browsing. A user searching for a known item is not necessarily searching for by exact title match. When we state that a user is searching for known items in their catalog, it means that they have a book or article in mind and are coming to the catalog to see if their library owns it. When they search the catalog (in our case the data we looked at was worldcat.org searches), they are still searching by keywords for a specific item.

From Participant to All Participants: Did OCLC also find that users typically only enter 2 to 4 word queries?

OCLC Comment: I don't think we know. We've captured these in usability tests, but neither the participant sample nor the set of tasks is sufficiently representative to generalize from on this point.

OCLC Comment: The citation to the Karen Markey article "25 years of subject searching" is in my presentation. The citation and the article's 75 references are available from <http://portal.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=1254867>. Since this article is a literature review, she really is summarizing just about every study that's out there about the number of words in queries, when she writes that the average query contains two to four words.

## Delivery

From Participant to All Participants: Delivery is the biggest problem we are encountering in trying to implement WorldCat Local. I'm glad to hear how important this is to OCLC.

From Participant to All Participants: Perfect -- the shopper mentality. Don't show what they can't get.

From Participant to All Participants: Links to full text are great, if the material is open access...but if it isn't it just creates frustration.

From Participant to All Participants: We need simpler linking to licensed content.

From Participant to All Participants: At least you should see what you have to expect if you decide to click on a link.

From Participant to All Attendees: Links should be to open access and subscribed electronic resources.

From Participant to All Participants: We do URL link checking in our OPAC, is OCLC doing any URL link checking for 856 fields in [WorldCat.org](http://WorldCat.org)?

From Participant to All Participants: Link resolvers are the biggest thing in the way of better direct linking.

From Participant to All Attendees: Would like to see access to licensed electronic resources with only a limited number of clicks - if there are too many clicks the user will get lost or give up.

From Participant to All Participants: I second that about the digital content and authentication.

From Participant to All Participants: It would have interesting to hear more about how you manage the problems related to availability and delivery of digital material.

From Participant to All Participants: More on digital content and delivery of the unique digital content.

OCLC Comment: Giving users clear and easy access to electronic content is something we've spent a lot of time focusing on in the past few months at OCLC, and we are continually making changes in our interface and the configurations allowed by library staff to their WorldCat Local instances to help the users get easy access to electronic material. We recognize that this is an extremely important feature of searching an online catalog for users. In the next few months, WorldCat Local customers will see changes that will improve the user experience so that the links we're displaying are most likely only links that the user can access via their library subscriptions. We are also working on ways to identify more open access items in our database as well as cleaning up links that would likely lead users to dead ends.

## Personas

From Participant to All Attendees: 1. Have you published the details of your OCLC personas?

OCLC Comment: At this time, we have not published the OCLC personas for WorldCat.org or WorldCat Local. These are used for our internal design purposes. But, publishing our profiles (the actual demographic and research data that we use to establish the personas) is something we've considered doing once we feel our data collection is sufficient.

2. Do you continue to edit/modify your personas over time?

OCLC Comment: Yes, every few years we review the marketing information and sometimes modify our personas as we learn more about our users and as our users, their technologies, and their expectations change and evolve.

From Participant to All Attendees: I would also be interested to have the personas published.

From Participant to All Participants: How did your use of personas impact the final design?

OCLC Comment: Personas are typically used to help define what features/functionality to focus on and prioritize. Sometimes we use personas to influence the look and feel of the design as well. We try to align search options with habits of students, although we take into account what librarians tell us.

From Participant to All Participants: Why were the primary personas only male?

From Participant to All Participants: I find it interesting that the percent of users [who responded to [WorldCat.org](http://WorldCat.org) surveys] who were business professionals was so much higher than other types -- retired folks, health care professionals, etc.

From Participant to All Participants: How do you resolve conflicting needs from different personas?

OCLC Comment: When selecting personas, you don't want to have more than two or three primary personas. If you have conflicting needs and have too many personas, you will never be able to meet the needs of all in one application. Sometimes you have to have two different interfaces for two very different users. Sometimes you can resolve the conflict by allowing the interface to be highly customizable (however, past studies show that customization is rarely used). For a catalog, that might mean providing an 'expert' type search feature as well as a more simple advanced search feature, or it could mean providing that feature only when someone logs in and we recognize them as a special type of user. Some websites provide silos for you to identify what kind of person you are if the needs are very different (for example, health care sites ask you to identify yourself as a doctor, employer, or patient). For WorldCat Local, we discovered very different needs for our public library and academic library personas and decided the best approach is to design 'themes' that could be chosen by each institution when configuring their WorldCat Local.

From Participant to All Participants: Another question for offline/later: Is there any dialogue devoted to differentiating between, or filtering out, stereotypes from personas? Seems like there might be a fine line, at least occasionally.

OCLC Comment: We base our personas off of “user profiles”. User profiles are very detailed and research based, and we get most of the information from real facts and data about our user populations. Personas don’t focus on the extreme characteristics of a certain kind of person like stereotypes do. Personas should be more like archetypes.

From Participant to All Participants: Why were your focus group participants that you labeled as scholars only representative of humanities and social sciences?

OCLC Comment: I (Karen) believe you are referring to a page from the full “Online Catalogs: What Users and Librarians Want,” specifically a table in the chapter on methodology. We did not seek to leave out scholars representative of science/technology/medicine. When you select individuals to invite to focus group sessions, you do your best to assure a balanced mix of the population being interviewed. However, much depends on who actually shows up at the specified date and time. It’s probably worth saying that the findings of focus groups aren’t intended to be representative of a whole population—you use this technique to get ideas about how to design further studies from which statistically valid conclusions can be drawn.

## Design suggestions

From Participant to All Participants: I would agree about adding summaries and TOCs, but cover art just burns up a lot of space while serving only a limited part of the demographic.

From Participant to All Participants: and many cover images aren't available at all.

From Participant to All Participants: In the Advanced Search, the fields Accession Number, ISSN, ISBN probably ought to be below the more understandable ones.

From Participant to All Participants: WorldCat in First Search exports records beautifully. Can WorldCat Local export that level of information?

From Participant to All Participants: RefWorks imported info is insufficient in WorldCat Local. Need summaries, abstracts, subject headings, or the record in RefWorks is too bare. Why did I save this? a user may ask.

From Participant to All Attendees: You said that users prefer to use back button, but there is no option to move to next or previous record.

OCLC Comment: I would say this issue deserves some investigation. Users looking for known items in relevance-ranked lists don't demonstrate any inclination, in our usability tests, to move through a result record by record. (Perhaps FRBR is a factor). Users doing subject searching don't either: they return to the search results page if they want to examine more than one item from a search result. Perhaps that's an approach cultivated by search engines.

From Participant to All Participants: Call number searching is key to helping a patron find a physical research in the library. They consistently only write down part of a call no. and or make mistakes.

From Participant to All Participants: Gale B - I agree re: call no.

From Participant to All Participants: Was call# searching requested by users?

OCLC Comment. It has not been requested by participants in our usability tests.

OCLC Comment: Searching by Call # has not been something requested by users who are searching an online catalog. Also, after looking through the queries users actually submit in worldcat.org and WorldCat Local, call # is rarely entered by users, especially in the keyword search box.

OCLC Comment: Obviously the call number is important for the delivery of wanted items that are in the stacks. However it doesn't seem to be used much currently in search queries. OCLC is however engaged with some partners in some interesting research into how to deploy the concepts associated with a classification system (Dewey) to assist end users with searching by topic. Check out CCQ v. 42, no. 3-4 for a whole issue of articles on taking classification to the next level--beyond shelf location. The articles by Diane Vizine-Goetz (OCLC Research) on the DeweyBrowser, and one by Magda Heiner-Freiling on DDC German are only two of many worthwhile submissions to this issue.

From Participant to All Attendees: Our patrons are having a problem finding the call number. Given what you know about the importance of delivery, can you please make it bigger?

**How people will use this information**

From Participant to All Participants: WebEx works well for me. I appreciate being able to participate remotely. Provided a good overview for me as our library prepares to redesign our OPAC.

From Participant to All Participants: It will help to provide a focus for cataloging and catalog changes that we are currently discussing.

From Participant to All Participants: Content was good too - will use it in evaluating our catalog.

From Participant to All Participants: I will definitely use the content in formulating changes.

From Participant to All Participants: We're doing things to our endeca based catalogue, and will base some of our decisions on our understanding of what our users want/need/do.

From Participant to All Participants: 3. Ideas for how to improve our catalog.

From Participant to All Participants: We will consider these ideas in our cataloging work.

From Participant to All Participants: I prefer the content the experts gave to us--very interesting! Think we should have had this info before we redesigned our web site recently, and think we'll use it in determining what database improvements to use in the cataloging dept. [...] I'll definitely share the slides you send with the public services staff and the rest of the catalog staff.

From Participant to All Participants: Was surprised to see the importance of subject data, we subscribe to toc's but will also make more effort w/ better subject analysis.

### **How OCLC uses these findings**

From Participant to All Participants: There seems some contradictions in your presented information and the way WorldCat Local is designed. Your presentation reflects our wishes. Please make WorldCat Local match your findings.

OCLC Comment: We're pleased that our usability findings in WorldCat Local aligns well with your wishes (which means your wishes align well with what your users want!) We make our recommendations to our product staff and they must prioritize our wishes along with feature/functionality that is going in. You can expect to see many of the recommendations we've made get rolled into WorldCat Local and WorldCat.org over the next year.

## Unfavorable views of polling - logistics - the third poll was closed too quickly

From Participant to All Participants: I couldn't see the voting buttons?

From Participant to All Attendees: example: The last question need a: I am not concerned.

From Participant to All Participants: It wouldn't take my answer.

From Participant to All Participants: I clicked on true but couldn't submit my answer.

From Participant to All Participants: We weren't allowed to answer.

From Participant to All Participants: My poll was showing closed long before it was announced that it was closed. I couldn't submit my answer

From Participant to All Participants: The poll locked up. Couldn't answer!!!

From Participant to All Participants: I wasn't allowed to answer!!

From Participant to All Participants: We tried to vote and couldn't!

From Participant to All Participants: We couldn't answer in time.

From Participant to All Participants: Could not answer.

From Participant to All Participants: My poll would let me vote on number 3.

From Participant to All Participants: There wasn't enough time to answer the 3rd question.

From Participant to All Participants: We couldn't answer.

From Participant to All Participants: We didn't choose not to answer - ran out of time.

From Participant to All Attendees: We couldn't answer #3.

From Participant to All Participants: Couldn't select and answer for last poll even though time was not up.

From Participant to All Participants: Polling worked sometimes, but often it was greyed out, not allowing me to answer.

## Unfavorable views of polling - logistics - the results window intrudes on chat

From Participant to All Participants: Did not really care for the polling aspect.

From Participant to All Participants: Format OK, polling didn't work well.

From Participant to All Participants: Poll results kept popping up during the chat.

From Participant to All Participants: The poll has continued to pop up and block chat! Really frustrating.

From Participant to All Participants: This is not a viable option for me. Also, the polling box keeps jumping up and obscures my view and use of the chat box. This is MOST irritating.

From Participant to All Participants: The poll keeps popping up in the sidebar and pushing the Chat out of view. Can that be fixed?

From Participant to All Participants: And the Chat window keeps closing, not just when I'm trying to read what shows up in the Chat, but even when I'm typing!

From Participant to All Participants: Poll box is not working well.

## Some conceptual questions about polling

From Participant to All Participants: What about all the OCLC employees listening in? Won't this have an effect on results since we're observing?

OCLC Comment: As I (Karen) mentioned during the session, the registration list indicated that only 5 or 6 OCLC staff members were listening in—too few to influence the polling results. (And most of them probably didn't respond anyway)

From Participant to All Attendees: Good question: what about staff at schools?

From Participant to All Participants: True and false are not good measures, anyway.

From Participant to All Attendees: So is the whole poll invalid?

From Participant to All Participants: Polls seemed like fluff to get our attention.

From Participant to All Participants: The questions on the polling were more opinion than anything else. Better questions, more factual.

From Participant to All Participants: Agreed that the polling didn't seem useful because of the specific questions asked.

### **Favorable views of polling**

From Participant to All Participants: The polling was fine, but just don't take over the menu on the right with the poll.

From Participant to All Participants: We liked the fact that the poll was live and interesting.

From Participant to All Participants: It was great to have the poll at the beginning, then the session, then to see that my answer changed.

From Participant to All Participants: I liked the polling.

From Participant to All Participants: Worked ok for me, I liked the insta-polling

From Participant to All Participants: Liked interactivity.

From Participant to All Participants: The polling was interesting. But I wasn't able to answer the third polling question. Everything was greyed out. If you started collecting the results too fast, that blocked us. So I say, continue the polling option, just leave enough time to answer.

From Participant to All Participants: Polling fine, but I should be able to minimize and have it stay.

From Participant to All Participants: Polling was a great feature.

From Participant to All Participants: Polling: good.

From Participant to All Participants: WebEx polling & chat were fine except for the audio problems; the polling obscuring the chat was fixable by changing the viewing options, but obviously not everyone was able to figure that out; a WebEx usability problem.

From Participant to All Participants: Could you do the poll at the beginning and continue with the presentation and then give the poll results later.

## Views of chat

From Participant to All Participants: Like the format, and chance for questions by chat.

From Participant to All Participants: Had problems with the sound, but I like the format and content. Although, trying to read chat and keep up with presentation is rather difficult.

From Participant to All Participants: Chat was good but hard to keep up with because of the number of comments.

From Participant to All Participants: Chat is good, but so many people attending limit access.

From Participant to All Participants: Content and format were decent. It would have been better if OCLC people who were not speaking could answer questions in chat as they popped up.

From Participant to All Participants: Interactive was useful and comments gave a nice perspective.

From Participant to All Participants: Chat worked very well, giving all an opportunity to speak, but the polling box wouldn't stay minimized. Phoned in so didn't have audio problems. Pleased that WebEx now works with Firefox.

## Responses to content

From Participant to All Participants: We liked the content, and appreciate the interactivity. We do need to find out what our patrons want, and this was very enlightening. We look forward to reading the reports in detail later. Thank you!

From Participant to All Participants: Content was very interesting; we need to know more about what users want & do.

From Participant to All Participants: Format is good technique is a problem content was very informative it's always inspiring hearing it from the people involved

From Participant to All Participants: This kind of usability testing is extremely important.

From Participant to All Participants: Content was very good. Just wish I hadn't missed so much on the results of your testing when the sound dropped out several times and it took so long to get back in by phone.

From Participant to All Participants: 2. Content good -- a little long.

From Participant to All Participants: Content: good.

From Participant to All Participants: Also found the info about faceted browsing, relevancy ranking and level of detail very valuable.

From Participant to All Participants: More talk about FRBR.

From Participant to All Participants: The content was very informative.

From Participant to All Participants: Priorities for types of data in OPAC info display useful.

From Participant to All Participants: The content was informative, I like the detail without being too focused on one area.

From Participant to All Participants: Re content - had read the March 2009 OCLC report, but was good to have another brief overview of key points.

From Participant to All Participants: Presentation is very good overall.

From Participant to All Participants: Content was fine.

From Participant to All Participants: Sorry I was unable to remain at my desk for the webinar. What I saw/heard seemed very informative. I look forward to viewing this in full on archive later.

From Participant to All Participants: Got some important definitions and broad overview of a very important topic. GOOD JOB!!!

From Participant to All Participants: More ideas about improving catalogs in general.

### **Favorable responses to format**

From Participant to All Participants: I would not be able to attend such if not online like this.

From Participant to All Participants: Appreciate time you took during presentation to answer questions - scheduling 1.5 hours for this kind of content is good.

From Participant to All Participants: Better at presenting information than most other webinars I've attended.

From Participant to All Participants: Interesting that you did the poll, posted your usability results, and then retook the poll again.

From Participant to All Participants: Liked NOT using the phone.

From Participant to All Attendees: Format acceptable having alternative dial-up for audio good back-up; audience feed-back helpful.

From Participant to All Participants: Format was good.

From Participant to All Participants: Format useful with polling.

From Participant to All Participants: The format was great for me as a student!

From Participant to All Participants: 1. Format was good.

From Participant to All Participants: Good format if bugs were fixed.

From Participant to All Participants: Format was fine.

From Participant to All Participants: Format: good.

From Participant to All Participants: Good format and content.

From Participant to All Participants: Good format. First time I ever had trouble with a WebEx audio.

### **Unfavorable responses to format**

From Participant to All Participants: Content good, but don't read slides! Say more about the context.

From Participant to All Participants: WebEx is a very poor platform for webinars.

From Participant to All Participants: The disruption in audio was frustrating. I have an open office and listening by phone means holding the receiver up to my ear. Otherwise, the format is good.

From Participant to All Participants: WebEx isn't the best.

From Participant to All Participants: Some of the screen shots were too hard to read.

### Some questions

From Participant to All Participants: Based on your research, what should we be providing in our online catalogs that we are not currently providing?

OCLC Comment: Our presentations at the webinar, plus our freely-downloadable report "Online Catalogs: What Users and Librarians Want," attempt to answer this question. For quite a bit more from other authors, you might start with the references to Karen Markey's widely-cited article "Online Catalogs: Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained" in DLlib Magazine (open access): <http://dlib.org/dlib/january07/markey/01markey.html>

From Participant to All Participants: What is the name of the eye-scanning software you've acquired?

OCLC Comment: Tobii

From Participant to All Participants: Also regarding the survey that we took: It is important to distinguish cataloging \*practices\* from \*catalog usability\*. Cataloging practices have to do with the creation of metadata. Catalog usability has to do with access to that metadata.

From Participant to All Participants: Practice and usability are interdependent, though.

From Participant to All Participants: Once again, cataloging \*practices\* (i.e. the creation of metadata) are different from catalog usability (the access to that metadata).

From Participant to All Participants: But practice does influence what people find and how.

From Participant to All Participants: Well, yes, but the interface has a pretty heavy influence.

From Participant to All Participants: True, but with tools like vufind, you have more or less complete control over the interface; how you index the metadata, which subfields and indicators you include, based on practice, is huge.

From Participant to All Participants: If you make a decision about how to handle an element of metadata, it can have a big impact on how usable your catalog is.

From Participant to All Participants: What does it mean for the catalog to look "more like a popular website"? Different popular websites serve different purposes and therefore look very different. Do users want [worldcat.org](http://worldcat.org) to look like [nytimes.com](http://nytimes.com)? Like [maps.google.com](http://maps.google.com)? Like [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)? What?

OCLC Comment: This is a good question, especially if the word "look" is construed widely enough. Academics are expecting something where search and retrieval are like Google--fast, precise even when it's keyword based, relevance ranked in a way that incorporates renown. The difference is that library catalogs include an attribute or authority or authenticity or reliability. Our test participants don't say they expect their library catalog to be more complicated than Google, they do say they want it to be more authoritative.

OCLC Comment: I (Karen) made the statement "more like a popular website" in my presentation and in my team's report. What we meant by "popular" is pretty much the sites that get the most traffic—that is, the most attention from end users on the Web. The thinking behind this statement harks back to the findings from the OCLC Perceptions study—that when asked where they begin a search for information, 84% of the respondents said they begin with a popular search engine (and 2% said they begin with a library Web site). If you look at a Web traffic evaluation site like alexa.com, you can see the world's 6 most popular web sites right now are Google, Yahoo, Facebook, YouTube, Windows Live, and Wikipedia. Three of these are search engines and one consists of community-contributed reference content. Amazon—a site often mentioned by our focus group participants as a place they visit often when searching for information--is the world's 29th most popular web site. (OCLC Perceptions report: <http://www.oclc.org/reports/2005perceptiOns.htm>).

From Participant to All Participants: Do successful users use the same search techniques as unsuccessful users? If not, what do they do differently? Are users capable of learning how to search better?

OCLC Comment: There are some good transaction log studies that reveal what errors end users make when searching. One good one is "When smart people fail: an analysis of the transaction log of an online public catalog" by Thomas Peters. It's from 1989 but you might be able to spin the research up to the present by looking at who's cited this article (you can get a list from Google Scholar).

From Participant to All Participants: Are the end users as aware of duplicate records as librarians are?

OCLC Comment: No, as Karen said. We sometimes include them in tests. Users don't stop to think about them. They choose one. Generally the first one.

From Participant to All Participants: Is the online version of shelf browsing important to librarians or users or both?

OCLC Comment: A number of people do their catalog searching from home vs. in the actual library. That might give us an indication of whether online shelf browsing is important to users (vs. call# browsing or shelf browsing), although we don't have direct research into that. We can only extrapolate.

OCLC Comment: Our (Karen's team's) study didn't show evidence that users are asking for online shelf browsing. On the other hand, Sony introduced the Walkman and it was hit—even though users hadn't asked for anything like the Walkman. I (Karen) think there is room for innovation here—that is, for making our efforts to classify materials work harder on end user's behalf. There have been some interesting experiments using classification to organize search results—see for example the results of the HILT project in the UK.

From Participant to All Participants: What data are you collecting from the expert community experiment.

From Participant to All Participants: Will the Expert Community Experiment stop this month? Do we know if the results have been good?

From Participant to All Participants: Will the ability to update records easily be expanded soon, or will it be awhile after the Experiment ends?

OCLC Comment: The results of the Expert Community Experiment have been great!

Please check out our web pages:

<http://www.oclc.org/US/EN/worldcat/catalog/quality/expert/>. Also, there is a Webinar on the Expert Community Experiment results coming up. If you are interested, please watch for an announcement and register.

From Participant to All Participants: What do users mean by more subject info in records?

From Participant to All Participants: What did user mean by more subject info in cat?

OCLC Comment: from the "Online Catalogs" report: [when they chose] "more subject information" [and] "more information in the details tab"—respondents appear to be expressing the desire for data elements not generally included in a standard catalog description [such as summaries and tables of contents]. The desired data elements may be structured or unstructured, but they need to help end users assess the utility of items in a result set and decide which ones merit taking the time to [obtain].

**Other**

From Participant to All Participants: When can we start using metasearch?

From Participant to All Participants: Metasearch is on now...

From Participant to All Participants: Isn't metasearch only working for FirstSearch databases?

From Participant to All Participants: We didn't get our sandbox yet! UConn.

OCLC Comment: Federated / non-OCLC resources aren't there yet, metasearch only works with OCLC licensed content right now.

From Participant to All Participants: No mention of that.

From Participant to All Participants: Learn more about the importance of contents and summary notes and showing them near the top of the record.

From Participant to All Participants: Content is good and helpful. When you talk about faceted browsing, are you really mean being able to search or discover using authority control?

OCLC Comment: By faceted browsing, we mean that users start a broad search and then use the facets in the left hand side of the search results to narrow their results to provide a smaller set of results (narrowing by Author, Format, Content, etc).

From Participant to All Participants: Summaries and abstracts were high on the users list, too.

## Archiving the presentation

From Participant to All Participants: Will this event be archived for those who miss it?

OCLC Comment: Yes. The recording should appear on <http://www.oclc.org/us/en/news/websessions/recorded.htm> in a few days.