USABILITY EVALUATION OF A MULTIMEDIA ARCHIVE: B@BELE
WHY A USABILITY STUDY

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During the DSpace User Meeting 2007 @ Roma:

It is decided to carry on some usability tests on B@bele, the DSpace installation of the Multimedia Production Centre (CPM) at the University of Milano-Bicocca.
B@bele is a recent application of DSspace 1.5. It is based on the new Manakin interface. It is used as digital archive by individual lecturers and the administrative personnel, for the multimedia projects managed by CPM. At present, it hosts six communities, each with a personalized layout.
Benvenuto in B@bele, CPM Digital Repository

B@bele è l'archivio digitale del Centro di Produzione Multimediale dell'Università di Milano-Bicocca. Contiene collezioni di materiale multimediale curate da docenti, ricercatori e ufficio amministrativi dell'università, relative a progetti di ricerca, tesi di dottorato, materiale didattico e informativo, eventi organizzati all'interno dell'ateneo. Alcune collezioni sono di pubblico accesso, altre richiedono una registrazione al sito o sono scaricabili a richiesta. È possibile navigare attraverso l'indice delle collezioni o utilizzando il menu laterale, o effettuare una ricerca inserendo una parola chiave nel box di ricerca.

Ricerca in DSpace

Inserisci un testo nel box sottostante per effettuare ricerche in DSpace.

Ricerca

Tutto DSpace

Comunità & Collezioni
Data di pubblicazione
Autori
Titoli
Soggetti

Comunità in DSpace

Selezionare una Sottocomunità per visualizzare le sue collezioni.

- ARCHIVIO GM - VERSIONE DEMO
- ARCHIVIO MULTIMEDIALE DI ATENEO
- CPM - CENTRO DI PRODUZIONE MULTIMEDIALE
- DOTTORATO QUASI
- NOMADIS
- ORIENTARCHIVIO
- TEST USABILITA'
OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

EVALUATE B@BELE MAIN FUNCTIONALITIES

SEARCH
The functionality of the search interface both in its simple and advanced version and navigation within each community and collection.

METADATA
Metadata management both in their submission phase and in their modification phase.

SELF-ARCHIVE
The functionality of the submission interface, i.e., the process of inserting items and documents with reference to the main options during workflow.
OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION/2

- Use users' familiarity with the terminology adopted (for instance, metadata, Open Access).
- The degree of difficulty in the execution of the predefined tasks.
- The level of users' satisfaction while interacting with B@bele.
SELECTED TEST SUBJECTS

15 END USERS, BELONGING TO 3 DIFFERENT USER CATEGORIES

5 USERS AS ADMIN STAFF

5 USERS AS PhD STUDENTS

5 USERS AS LECTURERS
METHODOLOGY

- Pre-test questionnaire to establish the user's habits in the use of the Web as a research instrument, the kind of documentary material they might be searching on the Web and their knowledge and expectations on the final product typology.

- A participant observation combined with a thinking aloud protocol, consisting in a series of predefined tasks that each user had to perform separately and sequentially. The complete test has been recorded using CAMTASIA.

- Post-test questionnaire to evaluate the usability of the specific interface.
RESULTS: TERMINOLOGY

- Problems with the terminology were related to the inadequate adherence of the DSpace phrasing into Italian, which was causing some inconsistencies due to bad translations:
  - The button "save and exit" has been translated literally from the previous Manakin interface version.
  - Many users did not know what to choose between the button "next", to continue with the submission, and the button "save and exit", that would have caused their submission to be ended.
  - The use of the term "save" did indeed induce many users to think that the saved item was published as well as the submission was over.
What was also missing was a clear and unambiguous nomenclature for each navigation button that could reflect its real function (for instance, a "continue submission" button instead of "continue" alone).

An exhaustive explanation of the more complex processes, like the workflow process, for example.
RESULTS: BROWSING IN COMMUNITIES AND COLLECTIONS

1. Difficulties in:
   - distinguishing the concepts of “community” and “collection”
   - identifying the dependencies between them (i.e., from community to sub-community and collection)
   - understanding the exact meaning ascribed to these two terms in this context since they are normally associated with social network research.

Comunità in DSpace

Selezionare una Sottocomunità per visualizzare le sue collezioni.

- ARCHIVIO GM - VERSIONE DEMO
  - Manifestazioni e manifestanti
    - Immigrant Rights
  - Quotidiani e riviste
    - Corriere della sera
    - The New York Times
  - Strategie di sopravvivenza
    - Bangladesh
    - Brasile
  - Trasformazioni metropolitane
    - Mappe tematiche
    - Origine della città
- ARCHIVIO MULTIMEDIALE DI ATENEO
  - Campus - Photogallery
    - Edifici e strutture
    - Vita nel Campus
  - Eventi
    - Cerimonia di inaugurazione A.A. 2007-2008 (27/11/07)
RESULTS:

- Difficulty in finding the link to the communities and collections on the Home page.
- Finally, once a community is selected, it is not intuitive for users to understand how many documents are included in a community and which, among those, are really downloadable in full-text.
The problem with submitting a new document depends on the layout of the upload page. Finding the upload link on that page is not simple since it is not visually recognizable as the link is inserted in the middle of the page.
RESULTS: WORKFLOW

- Need to systematically revise the workflow process which is now fragmented, redundant and not very intuitive:

  - The procedure requiring to accept the task before starting a new submission is not clear.
GUIDELINES: GENERAL

- Ada pt the DSpa ce /B@be to te rm inology to the conte xt of use , so tha t use rs with fa m ilia rity within a spe cific dom a in ca n re cognize the te rm s a dopte d.

- Include some form of he lp a nd use r’s support, for insta nce in the form of a glossa ry a cce ssible with a hype rlink to cla rify the m e a ning of spe cific DSpa ce te rm s.
GUIDELINES: TERMINOLOGY

- Replace the phrase "save and exit" with a more appropriate and intuitive phrase, for instance, "save and continue later".
- Rename the ADD button that is currently used to add multiple elements, for instance, authors' names, as "add co-authors" or make its function more explicit in the text.
- Specify the meaning of technical or librarian-like jargon terms like "series" or "reports".
GUIDELINES: NAVIGATION

- Include back and forth buttons to make navigation more user-friendly.
- Make the community page more comprehensible by:
  - Compresing the list of communities into a drop-down menu, so as to visualize each sub-level only when the higher level is selected.
  - Indicating for each collection the number of documents there include, and their status, as public or not, using, for instance, a lock icon.
GUIDELINES: NAVIGATION/2

- Distinguish visually between active and disabled breadcrumbs.
- Include an author authority system to speed up the process of inserting personal data and to prevent typing mistakes.
GUIDELINES: SUBMISSION

- Mark clearly all compulsory fields in order to speed up data submission and to allow users to insert only the really necessary metadata.

- Make the link to a new submission more visible, in a position where it can be easily found by the users.
GUIDELINES: WORKFLOW

- Insert a separate section for the tasks the reviewer should perform, since this function is at the moment by far intuitive and clear.
- Restructure the insertion page in order to reflect a more logical sequence from the point of view of a user executing a task.
CONCLUSION

- A user-centered design approach makes the discovery and submission interfaces of institutional repositories more effective and efficient.

- The shortcomings of the present DSspace interface:
  - difficulties with browsing within communities and collections
  - problems with the submission interface due to scarcely familiar terminology (metadata) or terms that are not relevant in the specific academic context (community)
  - problems in the submission process due to some ambiguous buttons, lack of authority files, and lack of clearly marked compulsory fields.
THANK YOU!!