ASK THE USERS EXPECTATIONS, BEHAVIORS AND SATISFACTION OF ONLINE ARCHIVES' END CUSTOMERS

Pierluigi Feliciati
University of Macerata (IT)
THE ARCHIVAL MEDIATION ON THE WEB

- The displaying of archival descriptions in Web environments (the *Docuverse paradigm*) deeply changes the traditional mediation between archivists and users.

- The hypertextual output must be roughly distinguished from the encoded input: to make it *decodable* and *clear*, we should build user centric displays.

- To build up effective displays we should match the *descriptive standards & methods* with human–computer interaction studies, checking our prototypes by adopting user studies.

- A BRAND NEW MEDIATION PARADIGM
Recently, the **quality of use** of AOL has been increasingly tested by involving real users, no longer merely inferred, mostly in North America.

Some **recurring issues** have been detected:

- **The terminology** adopted for descriptions
- **Menus** as a barrier
- The **hierarchic and separated structure** of descriptions
- The use of **searching tools**: AOL are not OPACS!
- **Search results** presentation and **rankings**
- **long narrations vs. brief descriptions**
THE BENEFITS OF EVALUATING UX

Quality of a digital service: “the capability of the software product to enable specified users to achieve specified goals with effectiveness, productivity, safety and satisfaction in specified contexts of use.” (ISO/IEC 9126–1:2001)

- **Studying** the needs, expectations, behaviors and satisfaction of final users (i.e. the **User Experience: UX**) should be part of digital services development.

- **Involving users** throughout design, development and release of archival digital projects cycle could become normal, to guarantee a effective **ROI** for projects whose first profit is **customers’ satisfaction**.
A POSSIBLE EVALUATION MODEL

Tsakonas, Papatheodorou 2008, *Tryptich Interaction Framework*
EVALUATION: WHEN?

throughout all the project life-cycle...

A Cry For Looking To Other Methods For User Centered Design, (Tristan Weevers, 2012)

and managing quality as an iterative process

EVALUATION: WHEN?

User studies are useful:

- in the **start phase** (to check user requirements)
- in the **prototype** phase (to assess and finalise the layout and the system)
- in the **on-going phase** (to check final user satisfaction and behaviour)

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**A timeline of design and evaluation of digital libraries (Tsakonas 2012)**
EVALUATION: HOW?

**User simulation**
- Profiles, Use cases, Personae
- Use scenarios

**Indirect observation**
- User logs analysis
- Sniffing, client-side analysis

**Direct user involvement**
- Questionnaires
- Diaries
- Single user observation/ eye-tracking
- Focus groups

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**Qualitative Summative**

**Quantitative**

**Qualitative Summative**

+ Growing use of mixed methods..
The available corpus of user studies reveals several weaknesses:

1. they are **not based on a common evaluation schema** and each study applied its own protocol
2. the usual **narrowness of panels** involved puts in discussion a wide reliability of collected data
3. some surveys were conducted without a **distinction among targets**: curios users, novice archival researchers and advanced scholars.

To face this panorama it could be crucial to build a **community and a normalized and shared benchmarking framework** in this field to **compare data** coming from different **studies, models and profiles** and to set up **historical series**
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

pierluigi.feliciati@unimc.it