

Keeping up with trends in your library: Simple and speedy ways to assess users' needs



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Southern Chapter MLA 2018
Orlando, FL
October 27, 2018

OBJECTIVES

- To find simple, fast, and easy ways to assess library users' needs.
- To get real-time responses in order to shorten the interval between deploying surveys, gathering responses and implementation of solutions.

What Didn't Work

In the past the library employed email surveys to assess user needs but the process was inefficient and ineffective due to low response rates and time spent creating online surveys.



What We Tried Instead

The library team began using paper "micro-assessments" to understand users' needs.



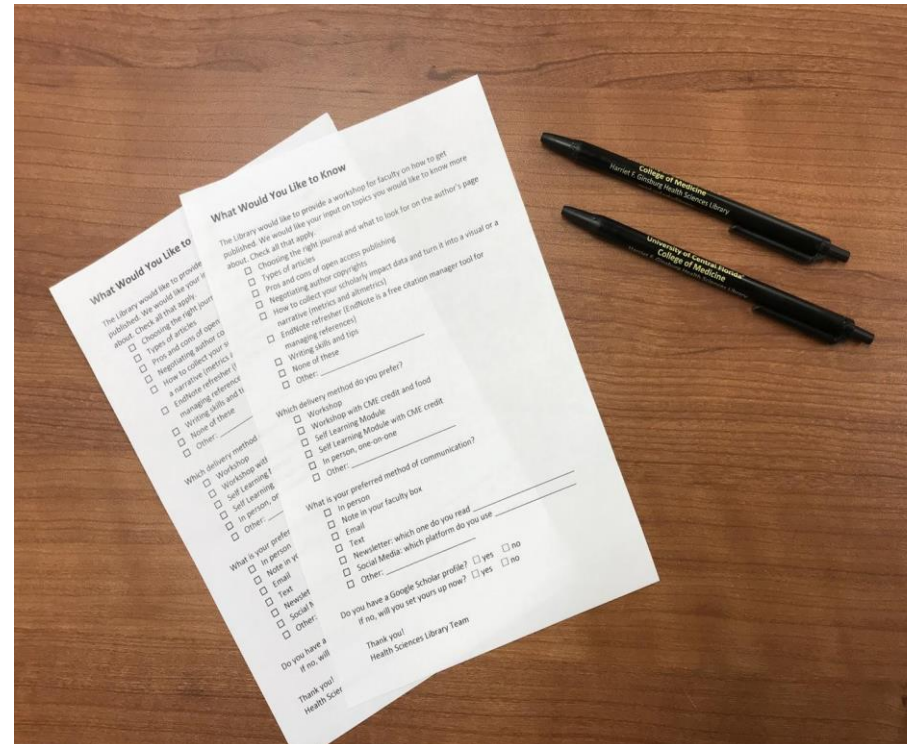
What's a Micro-Assessment?

Micro-assessments are “narrowly-focused, short assessment tools that can be quickly designed, implemented, analyzed and used to make changes to library services.”

-Micro-Assessments of Public Services Usability , Tim Hackman; Terry Taylor; Ryan Buller; Ashley McMullin; American Library Association Annual Meeting 2016; Orlando, FL; https://2016.alaannual.org/sites/default/files/AC16_ProgramBook_part2of3.pdf

Our Micro-Assessment

- Short paper surveys
 - no more than five questions
 - deployed at three different times throughout the academic year



How We Deployed the Assessments

- Medical students were handed surveys during one of the library's weekly events about their use of library-issued iPads
- Surveys were left on each study space in the library quiet room over the course of one week asking about students' opinions on food being allowed in the library quiet room
- Faculty were handed surveys during departmental meetings to assess their interest in scholarly publishing topics.
- Completed surveys were collected and results were tabulated the same day

RESULTS

- Student iPad micro-assessment:
 - helped librarians understand students' use of library-issued iPads
- Student survey about food in library:
 - informed policy decisions in regards to allowing food in the library quiet room

RESULTS

- Faculty micro-assessments led to:
 - development of a 5-minute Topic Talks series
 - short presentations on scholarly communication topics delivered by librarians during faculty departmental meetings
 - one-on-one EndNote training sessions
 - creation of “Getting Published” Workshop

CONCLUSION

- This low-tech solution to gather library user feedback has informed policy decision-making, and created opportunities for new services and programming.
- Using micro-assessments provided a vehicle for librarians to listen to users' needs and develop solutions at warp speed.

Questions?



Contact Us!

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