Mobile library services: what do users want?

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Background
- Texas A&M University Libraries
  - 55,000 + students and faculty
  - Main library with 5 branches
- Libraries web site
  - Centralized management with CMS
  - Content contributed by librarians and staff
  - Usual collection of vendor-supplied library software

Spring 2010 Survey
- Debate within the Libraries over what mobile to do and how much mobile to do
- Need to focus resources on what is wanted and not just the latest cool thing
- Decided to ask users instead of just making assumptions

Spring 2010 Results
- 79.3% of respondents wanted a mobile library website
Spring 2010 Results

- **Most important features**
  - Order books held for you
  - Renew books
  - Search for books
  - Reserve/place holds on books
  - Library hours
  - View checked out books
  - Search for articles

- **Least important features**
  - Library podcasts
  - Find/read theses and dissertations
  - Suggest a purchase
  - Today’s events
  - List of new books
  - Maps/directions to the libraries

- **Comments**
  - PLEASE just make it simple .. nothing complicated
  - It should be flexible and easy to use.
  - Please design it so that its available to all devices and not only the iphone
  - Would have been nice two or three years ago.

- **But ...**
  - Only 193 respondents
  - Only those interested in mobile needs would respond.
Fall 2010 Survey

- Overall Libraries’ web site survey
  - More responses
  - Not mobile specific
- Mobile questions
  - Simplified – only 4 questions
  - Dropped low-scoring options from spring survey
  - 2013 respondents

Would you like to be able to view the Libraries’ website on your cell phone/mobile device?

- Yes: 25%
- No: 28%
- Not sure: 47%

Cell phone/mobile device(s) used

- Undergraduates
- Graduate students
- Faculty
**Feature Importance: Important or Very Important**

- **Read articles**
- **Search for databases**
- **Read e-books**
- **Chat with a librarian**

[Graph showing feature importance with Undergraduates, Graduate students, and Faculty categories]

**Comments**

- Few comments re: mobile issues and those generally were “more”
- Seemed to be more concerned about other issues
  - Better search for our stuff
  - Authentication issues

**What We’re Doing**

- Moved mobile site to a faster platform
- Trying to include mobile interfaces in solutions to overall problems
  - Added LibGuides
  - Added a Text a Librarian service
  - Purchased a discovery layer with mobile interface
  - Looking into a room reservation system with mobile interface
EBSCO Usage Statistics (Spring)

**Monthly Average – Regular**
- Searches – 74451
- Abstracts – 251314
- Full text – 5056
- Abs/Search – 3.37
- FT/Search – 0.07

**Monthly Average – Mobile**
- Searches – 200
- Abstracts – 83
- Full text – 12
- Abs/Search – 0.41
- FT/Search – 0.06
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