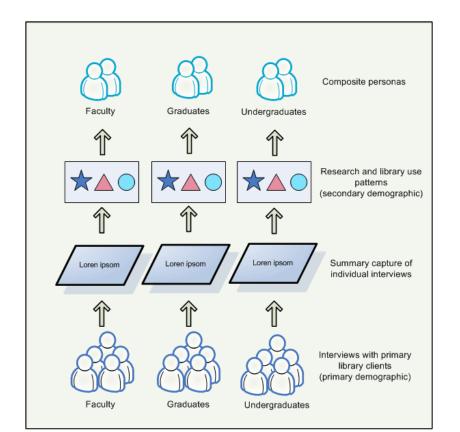# The Cornell University Library Personas

The Cornell University Library (CUL) personas were developed during April and May of 2007 as part of CUL's Web Vision Project. They are designed to provide insight into the various research practices and processes used by primary clients the library. The personas will be used both during the initial design of CUL's new platform for online access and to validate various design iterations for the platform as they are developed.

The Persona Development Process

During the week of April 23, 2007, TKG Consulting LLC conducted a series of 36 interviews with Cornell faculty, graduates, and undergraduates. The interviews (each lasting approximately 30 minutes) were captured via recordings and notes. The notes and recordings from the interviews where summarized and synthesized into a standard framework that included basic background information on the individual being interviewed, general projects and research areas, preferred work locations, research patterns, indications of library use, and any challenges, concerns and recommendations experienced by the interviewees. The personas were developed from this document and supplemented by excerpts from the recordings.
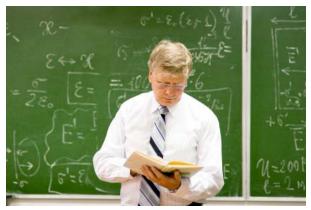
The step-by-step process for developing the personas involved:

- Separating the interviews into three groups, namely, faculty, graduates, and undergraduates;
- Analyzing the interviews within each group and noting the primary research and library interaction patterns;
- Further grouping the interviews by primary research patterns and using the patterns as a secondary demographic and the main organizing construct of each persona;
- Populating each persona with real world examples from each associated interview.

Distribution of Interviews by College or School

Primary Demographic	Agriculture and Life Sciences	Architecture, Art and Planning	Arts and Sciences	Engineering and Computer Science	Hotel Administration	Human Ecology	Industrial and Labor Relations	Law	Veterinary and Animal Science	Weill Medical
Faculty	1	1	4	1	1		2		1	1
Graduates	2	1	3	1		1		2	1	
Undergraduates	2	1	2	2	2	3	1			

Faculty Persona 1: Ken

One degree of separation…

Background

Ken is a tenured professor and an economist in the College of Arts and Sciences. He has been at Cornell for 25 years. Much of his scholarly work is pursued in collaboration with graduate students in his department. He typically puts forth ideas or strategies for research that are derived from his earlier consulting work and asks the students he is working with to pursue a particular idea or area of research. He maintains periodic contact with the students he is working either in person or via email and further directs their research by posing additional strategies or points of view as they go along.

For the courses he is teaching, Ken moves beyond the textbook and relies on practical experiences from his years of consulting and then supplements those experiences with current published scholarship in his field. He occasionally uses examples from the popular press in class.

Library Interactions and Transactions

Because he acts in a collaborative and advisory capacity for graduate students, Ken thinks of his direct contact with library resources and personnel as minimal. He does, however, keep current in ongoing scholarship by scanning the University's journal databases via the library web site. He often uses resources such as LexisNexis, JSTOR, and various subject-specific journal databases.

Problems of access or "research dead ends" are typically experienced by the graduate students he is working with and his role is to suggest alternative avenues of research rather than to try to directly solve any access issues.

When he does run into problems in accessing journals online, he uses the "Ask a Librarian" feature on the library web site. He says he has "not set foot in an actual library for 20 years" and relies completely on online access, email inquires, and delivery services.

Key Experiences

Because Ken never actually goes to a library and because any contact he has with librarians is online, he does not consider himself a frequent or heavy user of libraries. He does not consider his access of online library resources and the intersection between online searches and library holdings as "true library use" and is generally unaware of specific services provided by the library. He hastens to add, however, that he has found resources like JSTOR and LexisNexis and their underlying content to be invaluable and that "turn around for 'Ask a Librarian' is quite good."

The only problem that he sometimes encounters is that he cannot always find or access journals online. He will not try endlessly to access the article. He will typically try a couple of online searches and if that does not locate it, he will ask a librarian for help.

Since most of the online research he is involved in is performed by graduate students, he hears about any troubles with access second hand.

Luxuries, Comforts and Necessities

- He assumes that there will be seamless online connections with library content and services including assistance from librarians as required.

- He wants access to a variety of search engines and online content sources with no real distinction and no thought necessary between what are Cornell and non-Cornell resources.

- He expects to never have to physically enter the library.

- He relies on a certain level of service, primarily from his graduate students and secondarily from library staff.

Faculty Persona 2: Gerald
Practical experience is primary, library is secondary

Background

Gerald is an associate professor in the School of Hotel Administration and has been at Cornell for 15 years. He works largely independently, without the help of graduate students. He thinks of research in terms of moving from practical experience in the field to more general models, and then applying those generalized models to real world situations as standardized practices for procedural, legal, strategy, and management tools.

This being the case, Gerald begins his research in the field talking to hands-on practitioners and then supplements this primary field research with online searches that include text books, government codes and regulations, and documentation produced by various professional associations. While working in the field, he collaborates with other team members and colleagues either on site or via email.

For added input he attends both professional and academic conferences to find out what others are doing and to generate new ideas for research. In all cases, the emphasis here is on real experience through observation or inquiry.

Gerald uses scholarly journals "as a check" and to keep abreast of what is currently going on in his area of study.

Library Interactions and Transactions

Because his research often involves the intersection between practical experience and government data or mandates, Gerald relies heavily on non-Cornell resources for his work. He regards Cornell library holdings as supplementary. When he does access journals, he relies on online access mechanisms such as SLA database, Google, and Google Scholar.

When Gerald *does* think of the library services offered by Cornell, he often thinks in terms of academic course development. He uses the library's book and journal collections to supplement his own field and technical experience and to develop a broad portfolio of courses for undergraduates, graduates, and executive education.

While he begins his library search online with the library catalog and journal collections, he often augments his online searches with trips to the library stacks. When he began his work in the early 1990s, he worked in a largely offline world and sees real benefit to continuing the practice. The

library is completely different environment where he can think about what he has learned in the field. He learns by going up and down the stacks. "How can you replicate this experience?" When he cannot find things in the local collection he accesses them through Borrow Direct and interlibrary loan.

During his courses he uses library sources to demonstrate to students what is available and emphasizes the range and the depth of the collections at Cornell.

Key Experiences

In general his online and offline library experience are certainly part of the research mix but are not his primary source of data or information. At times he has lost access to published sources when there is a gap between subscriptions.

He has noticed that Cornell has changed the way it handles electronic journals and there are often three different versions of the journals available. The website does not tell you which version to choose or even why there is more than one choice.

Not all materials show up in the online databases and they often do not include government reports that contain relevant information. In one case a government report was critical to a project and he would have missed it if a colleague had not told him about it.

He tends to buy textbooks rather than search for them and has not taken the time to experiment with asking the University to purchase the book that he particularly wants for the collection.

Luxuries, Comforts, and Necessities

- Gerald finds it frustrating when he can get only abstracts of journal articles and the full text is not available for some reason. He figures it is something that he is doing wrong and "just needs to find time to figure out how the system works."

- Its not always evident from the search results whether the journal exists as full text on line; it would be great if you could tell before trying to access the article.

- He needs a search interface to reliably search for "gray literature" such as government reports that do not typically show up in the scholarly databases.

- He needs library online databases to develop courses and curriculum for a broad portfolio of undergrad, grad and executive education courses.

- He uses the library stacks for "research by proximity and association."

- Because he is sometimes involved in presenting about the university to outside groups, he would like images of the university included in an online image repository.

Faculty Persona 3: Lisa

Seamless access

Background

Lisa is an assistant professor in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and has been at Cornell for five years. She works independently, developing and pursuing various research projects at the same time. She also teaches two introductory undergraduate courses.

Her research is focused almost entirely on scholarly journals that she accesses online via a number of general and specialized databases and search engines. In addition to more general literature and journal searches, she will occasionally look for specific papers on government and international association websites. She tends not ask graduate students to do literature searches "because they do not know what they are looking for."

She occasionally makes use of Wikipedia for quick informational searches, particularly for subjects that are outside her area of scholarship. However, she steers students away from basic Wikipedia and Google searches because they tend to rely on these sources too exclusively. "You see far too much direct copying of information and over-reliance on non-scholarly sources."

For the introductory courses she is teaching, she has developed a dedicated website that allows students to download readings, lecture slides, and exams from the previous year. She also uses Blackboard on occasion for the same purpose but for large general education classes that are repeated often, a dedicated website works best.

Library Interactions and Transactions

To do basic scholarly research, she typically selects a search mechanism such as Google Scholar, Web of Science, SciFinder, arcXiv, AGRICOLA, or various government sponsored databases that link back into Cornell resources. She accesses the full text journal articles that are available through Cornell.

Since Lisa relies almost exclusively on published sources that she accesses online, she is extremely aware that she depends on Cornell library holdings and online access mechanisms everyday. She also knows that there is a "technical handoff" between the external search mechanism she chooses to locate the article and the Cornell Library holdings which brings her the full text of the article.

For journals that are not available through Cornell she will use Interlibrary Loan. As a last resort, she will use the "Ask a Librarian" feature on the library web site. She figures she asks a librarian for direct help about three times a year.
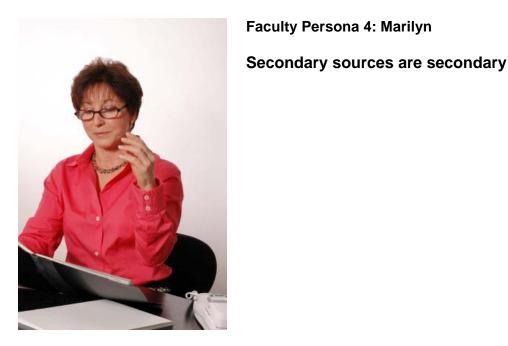
Key Experiences

Lisa is very aware of the current state of the library's capabilities for delivering journals online (both the positives and the negatives) and has strong opinions about how it should work. She echoes the widely held frustration that journals are not always available and it is not immediately apparent from her searches which journals are available online from Cornell, which are available in hard copy only, and which are not available at all. She estimates that 5-10% of the time she cannot get the full text articles from Cornell.

Lisa questions the need for distinction between Cornell holdings and non-Cornell holdings and asks whether it's important that a user know if Cornell owns the resource or not. She thinks the retrieval process for journals could be much more seamless and actually guide the user through the process. At present she feels that she has to figure out the system and take different courses of action depending on whether Cornell owns the resource or not or whether it's held electronically or in hard copy.

Interlibrary loan can be faulty as well. Sometimes she goes to the trouble of requesting and waiting for a journal volume and the wrong volume gets sent.

Luxuries, Comforts, and Necessities

- Lisa wants search and access mechanisms to move away from the notion of Cornell holdings and non-Cornell holdings and move toward a more seamless "one click" experience where forms are pre-populated from previous screens and the system is more intuitive.

- Lisa thinks that copyright restrictions for scholars should be eased particularly in terms of her use and distribution of her own work. There are even restrictions on how many times she can post a link to an article on Blackboard. She understands that the library has been active in resolving these issues.

- If she can get what she is looking for immediately it's a huge help since it does not stop the research process. "Efficiency of systems translates to efficiency of work."

- She relies on interlibrary loan for journals when she needs to, although she wishes she did not have to rely on it.

- Being relatively new to Cornell, Lisa needs a mechanism to connect with fellow colleagues within the university that she would not normally encounter during her teaching or research. She also needs a centralized way to find out about campus resources and upcoming events.

Faculty Persona 4: Marilyn

Secondary sources are secondary

Background

Marilyn is a professor in the College of Arts and Sciences and has been at Cornell for 22 years. She balances teaching with research, and notes that the amount of time she devotes to research ebbs and flows depending on her teaching load.

In terms of research, she follows a classic humanities pattern of combining published sources of current scholarship that keep her up-to-date and open up her thinking, with primary research in archival repositories that include manuscripts, image collections, quantitative data, and artifacts. She looks for primary archival materials in a variety of ways, both conducting online searches of repositories with published finding aids and digitized collections, and when necessary, making actual visits to repositories with collections that are only available in hard copy. Many times, new research and writing projects are inspired by questions and ideas that arise from earlier research. She works largely independently on these projects, and only occasionally calls on graduates and undergraduates to do analysis on statistical and quantitative data.

In terms of her teaching, she spends time constructing curriculum for her undergraduate courses that introduce students to working with primary research materials in archival collections. She even holds classes in Cornell's manuscripts and archival repositories to emphasize the value of these collections.

Library Interactions and Transactions

Marilyn's primary experience with Cornell's libraries is both wide ranging and traditional, with use of the online catalog, journal databases, physical repositories, and Borrow Direct services. For archival collections further a field than Cornell, she searches archival databases and finding aids makes arrangements directly with the repository that holds the material.

Key Experiences

Marilyn is very satisfied with Cornell's established library services. After years of being at Cornell, she can navigate the online sources and offline facilities very well and has a good relationship with the university's librarians. She appreciates the open stacks at Cornell and the opportunity for serendipitous discovery that they bring. She knows that not all universities offer this resource.
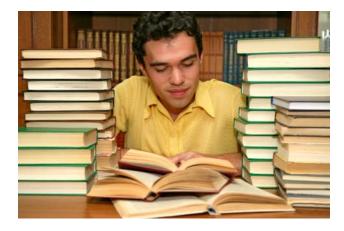
She worries however, that as more resources move online, the opportunity for serendipitous discovery of materials will decline. She is already seeing the tendency in her undergraduate students to rely only on online sources. She notes that two students doing a research paper on a similar subject, one using hard copy collections, the other using only online sources, will have completely different experiences with very different outcomes.

Marilyn's major area of concern is the library's lack of a single, fully developed platform for access, management, and distribution of digital images. Marilyn is impressed with the capabilities of ARTSTOR which seems to be a good companion to JSTOR in terms of functionality and scalability. She worries that the libraries current reliance on Luna Insight for image management will not scale with the university's needs.

As she gathers images from research trips or dealings with other repositories, there are no online tools to manage these materials during her research. In terms of teaching, many classrooms lack projection facilities and there is not an easy and consistent way for placing images on the web for students as part of the course materials.

The current slide library is based on arrangement of hard copy slides in conventional boxes that lack complete finding aids and individual caption information. While the slide library staff will duplicate slides or produce a digital image, the collection is not managed digitally and they are not available on the Web.

Luxuries, Comforts, and Necessities

- She needs a consistent way to integrate moving and still images into her lectures and course materials.

- She needs a single digital image platform that aggregates the various collections throughout the university, incorporates the hard copy slide library, manages temporary image collections for individual research projects, makes selections of images available for class work, and allows for copyright restrictions.

**Graduate Persona 1: Jason
"Sometimes it's important to be near the books."**

Background

Jason is a third year PhD student in the College of Arts and Sciences. He is currently beginning preparation for his dissertation. At this stage of his graduate career, he spends his days in the library, doing literature searches, reading current scholarship, and supplementing his journal reading with authoritative texts from the library that are cited in the articles or recommended by his advisor.

Jason often begins a research project by posing questions from his earlier graduate work. He uses a wide variety of sources, typically starting with searches of online bibliographies and journals which often lead to obscure resources in repositories that he did not know about or expect. After getting a sense of the current scholarship, he transitions to broader topics which he can apply to a specific case that interests him. He often ends his search in the library stacks looking for associated material.

Jason works primarily independently although he is in periodic contact with the professors in his department and a small group of his peers. In the past he was involved in field work that was group-based and much more collaborative.

In order to stay current with the literature in his area, Jason keeps his eye on three to five journals and monitors the websites of several international organizations for current literature and papers.

Library Interactions and Transactions

Because his work is interdisciplinary and is heavily reliant on published sources, Jason is in the library everyday. He reads in the library, he alternates between accessing journals online and books in the stacks, and he reads books on reserve that are out of print and not available elsewhere. "Sometimes it's important to be near the books." When Cornell does not have the material he is looking for, he goes to the Borrow Direct network via the library web site.

He uses the Library web site for library hours, maps of library, library purchase requests, and to contact librarians; he has also used the contact a librarian live feature but is a bit reluctant because he does not know who is on the other end, particularly for more specialized requests. He has not used the subject guides on the Library web site but does refer his undergraduate students to them.

Key Experiences

There have been only a few times that Jason could not find what he was looking for online; overall the system of online access, online catalog and Borrow Direct seems to work well. He has transferred materials from various libraries and has had a good experience over all.
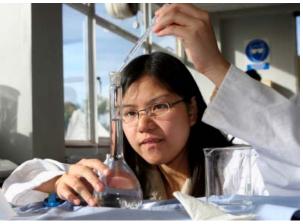
Librarians are very accessible although he wishes there was more integration between his department and the libraries in terms of resources; if he had his preference it would be to have all materials he needs at Cornell but knows that's not realistic.

He finds that Google Scholar is great in terms of targeting searches, particularly when he does not have the full citation. He generally pairs this with a search of the online catalog. He frequently needs to search for resources that do not use the Roman alphabet and so transliteration becomes a problem.

On several occasions in the past, Jason has used Google Books to access full text books online. He can do a search on selected keywords and highlight portions of the book he should look at. He can only use Google Books to find older books where copyright is not an issue however; for newer books, he relies on the library.

Jason occasionally uses Wikipedia and other popular websites for brief but unreliable descriptions of sources; for instance if he goes to a seminar talk and there is something that he is unfamiliar with, he might use Wikipedia as a first step; if he wants to research it further he would go to the library.

Luxuries, Comforts, and Necessities

- "The problem with technology is that you just expect it to work." The interface either works or it doesn't work. He does not spend a lot of time thinking about what would make it better.

- Copyright issues surrounding e-reserve should be made easier since it affects his ability to retrieve or distribute materials easily.

- He has seen a "referenced by" feature on Google that is interesting and potentially very useful. It displays the other articles that are currently referencing the article you are looking at.

- Materials that are specifically requested should not be put out for general use. He ordered a DVD to be purchased, hoping to teach with it; he waited a week for it to arrive and in that time someone had checked it out; he recalled it; it was returned and was missing off the shelf; he put a trace on it with no results; essentially he had requested the purchase and never got it.

- There is such a lax lending policy that the library shelves seem depleted. He doesn't like the new recall system. People at the graduate level can check books out almost indefinitely. He thinks there needs to be some shelf integrity. "The unique thing that the library offers is the opportunity to see the books and make connections based on proximity."

- He uses Borrow Direct and interlibrary loan all the time. "It's pretty effective for getting almost anything."

Graduate Persona 2: Amy
Online access all the time

Background

Amy is a second year graduate student in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. She currently splits her time between class work, time in the lab, and studying from home. Since much of her work is either course driven or in the lab, she does not consider herself a particularly heavy library user. In fact, since her current coursework is taught by leaders in the field, she tends to rely on lectures rather than library resources. "These are the people that in many cases wrote the articles," she says.

She collaborates with others in a once-a-week "journal club" where colleagues share what they have learned in their research during the previous week. She also seeks advice from graduates in other departments, her faculty advisor, and other professors, particularly if she knows that someone else has worked on specific areas. "It is much faster to talk to a person that has already done it than to start at square one with internet searches."

A typical research situation in the lab involved figuring out how to do an assay to see if her cells in the lab were proliferating. She uses company websites quite frequently for information on the lab products she uses and uses professional association sites for recent papers and information on developments in her field.

Amy does note one recent exception to her modest use of the library; she did extensive research to design a writing course for undergraduates. She did most of the research on the web using Google, ask.com, and online Cornell resources. She used the popular search engines initially to get a sense of what types of materials are out there then moved to Web of Science and PubMed for access to journal articles. She loves to learn by teaching because it really helps solidify knowledge.

For her thesis she needed to find out about a variety of scientific methods; so she went to the literature to figure out which methods are appropriate; first she Googles for scientific articles or goes to library website to look for appropriate books; she also goes to amazon.com; she does a search and the search will tell her how many times key words appears in the book; if that looks good then she checks the library for the book.

Library Interactions and Transactions

When Amy does use the library, it is almost exclusively for online access to journal articles. She typically does journal searches as background research, to see what others have done in the same field so as not to repeat anything.

copyright Cornell University, 2007

At home she connects through the library web site to get library access; she likes searching through PubMed and then bouncing back and forth between two browsers to see if there is access to the articles through Cornell.

When she is on campus, she knows she does not need to go through the library web site for access to library holdings. She can go directly to the search engine or database of choice (which in most cases is PubMed) and then link directly to full text sources held by Cornell.

Aside from PubMed, she uses Web of Science to access articles. "You can find almost anything on Web of Science including how many times a particular work has been cited."
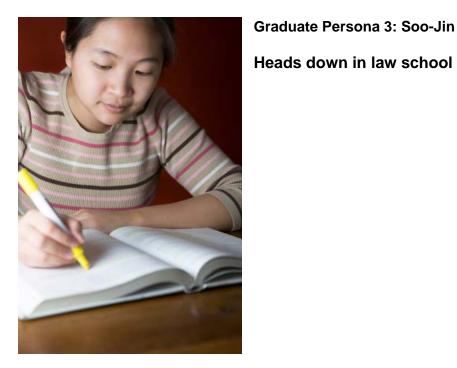
Key Experiences

She does on occasion use e-Journals but no one has shown her how to use the full breadth of the resources and functionality on the library web site; she has a sense there are more resources and tools than she knows about.

She occasionally has problems with journals online. Sometimes, she will get an "access forbidden" note when she uses one route to the full text document and encounters no problem with another route; she has noticed that even going through the library web site there could be problems accessing materials via one route versus another.

She has asked advice from librarians a few times, once to find a book that was just out and another to inquire about global imaging services. She notes that interaction is minimal, "If I can avoid going to the library I will."

Luxuries, Comforts, and Necessities

- Amy is aware that there are lots of events at Cornell that she is not taking advantage of, for instance, there was a training workshop that she did not hear about in time and missed. It would be great if there was a better way to learn about upcoming events that were keyed to her area of interest.

- She uses Blackboard to post documents and PowerPoint presentations for the courses she is teaching and for accessing materials from her professors. "It definitely makes it difficult when a professor does not use Blackboard."

- When Cornell does not have the journal she is looking for or if the journal holdings do not go back far enough, it turns one task into two; everything delivered to her desktop in a single format would be the ideal.

- She does rely on Borrow Direct if materials are not available through Cornell. First she searches at Cornell then goes to Borrow Direct.

Graduate Persona 3: Soo-Jin

Heads down in law school

Background

Soo-Jin is a second year law student and is currently immersed in a law classes. Her days are filled with attending lectures and reading casebooks that are assigned by her professors. There is not much room for wide ranging research in her study these days. She generally receives directed assignments from class and accesses case law, law journals, and law reviews to complete her assignments. She uses some scholarly publications and once in a great while she accesses news reports on LexisNexis to get a sense of what a particular legislature was thinking at the time a law was passed.

She works independently in her coursework, and is actually prohibited from sharing her answers with her peers. An exception to this is her work on the Law Review, where she works in a team to prepare the issue for publication.

A typical research task from her lawyering class involved accessing statutes from LexisNexis. All law students are given an account to both LexisNexis and Westlaw when they enter the Law School. She was given a fact pattern and an associated issue (for instance criminal theft); she accessed LexisNexis, found the correct jurisdiction, located the applicable statutes, and then checked with her professor to be sure it was correct. "The more you work with doing searches on LexisNexis the better you get," she says.

Library Interactions and Transactions

For Soo-Jin, access to library resources is almost entirely online. She does not use the hard copy collection in the library because online sources, accessed through Westlaw or LexisNexis, are much more current. She is not entirely sure if the case materials she is accessing online come from the library's collection.

Soo-Jin sometimes uses Google and Wikipedia as good starting points for basic research, especially for topics that she knows little about; then she goes to LexisNexis or Westlaw for more in-depth searches. She seldom if ever accesses the CUL online catalog.

She does occasionally check out Horn Books overnight from the Law Library. Horn Books gives her good, understandable information on contract law in a nutshell.

She does ask librarians for help on a regular basis. Her work on the Law Review requires her to check the sources of articles that are scheduled for publications. She typically asks the librarians to help her.

Other than her work with librarians on the Law Review, she generally thinks of the physical library as a "quiet environment with computers and printers" but not much else.

Key Experiences

It is sometimes difficult for her to find enough cases to read to get abreast of the topic. She occasionally encounters dead ends while searching on LexisNexis which is frustrating; she understands that it is part of the process however.

She prefers LexisNexis to Westlaw at this point, largely because she uses it more. "It feels less stuffy and more user friendly." She does think that the mechanics of both LexisNexis and Westlaw (in terms of searches, search results, and the overall interface) are pretty equal.

Luxuries, Comforts and Necessities

- In order to complete her assignments Soo-Jin needs reliable access to LexisNexis and to the case materials she finds.

- Because her course work is so directed, Soo-Jin does not spend much time thinking about library services and what is available there. "I really am just focused on coursework at this point."

Undergraduate Persona 1: Stacy

No boundaries

Background

Stacy is a sophomore in the College of Architecture, Art and Planning. Because her course of study focuses on various aspects of visual design, she spends much of her time looking for inspiration in art, architecture, and nature. "I really use lots of sources to get ideas including books in the library, art in museums, and images on the internet."

Her pattern of research has three basic phases: Look for artistic inspiration, specific design motifs, and related information from a variety of sources, synthesize the information and shape her thinking, and then execute a design in the studio as part of her coursework. For her, the source of the information can come from anywhere and is really irrelevant. She just needs to know where to look.

Typically she will choose a theme and project and then iterate on it in the studio for an entire semester, incorporating new information and honing her ideas. Some of her projects are highly independent, others involve working in groups and building on ideas from her colleagues. Her studio work involves developing prototype designs by using CAD software, constructing physical models, and sketching on paper. For sharing CAD files among her colleagues, she uses cben.net since there is no equivalent functionality at Cornell.

Library Interactions and Transactions

Stacy uses art and architecture books in the library to get ideas for projects. She does not rely on the library's journal collections, her emphasis is on books. She uses the online catalog to get started but

spends most of her time pulling books from the stacks and looking for images. She has discovered that some of the images she has found in books have also made their way to the internet. She can sometimes find an image in a book, get the reference, and find a digital version of the same image on the internet.

She thinks of the library's online services as ways to locate the hard copy collections rather than as a source for full text information such as journals. She doesn't distinguish between the online catalog and the library web site. For her, the web site is just the way to get to the catalog with some additional information mixed in.

Stacy used to work at the fine arts library and knows that they have good indexes of magazines on permanent reserve. Her friends rely on her to point them in the right direction particularly when it comes to online services. "When you are just an average user the online library system can be confusing and result in bad search results."

Key Experiences

There are really no digital image collections that she knows of at Cornell. She relies on Getty Images and veer.com as good sources for digital images. She has used the slide library once or twice but found it difficult to search through drawer after drawer of physical slides so she tends not to use it. She also noticed that the slides seem to be mostly of images rather than drawings.

She has tried to use the "ask a librarian" feature but sometimes she gets the feeling that there are not enough resources to handle all the requests so you have to wait for a reply.

If you don't bring the book back on time you get an "outrageous fine, something like $30."

Luxuries, Comforts, and Necessities

- The length of time you are allowed to check a book out seems way too short even for obscure titles that rarely get checked out; it seems to her that there should be some sort of check for demand that would govern the length of checkout time.

- It would be great if you could reach a librarian 24 hours a day.

- She would love to see more public computers in the library to alleviate wait time.

- She would like a better way to find images in the slide library.

- She uses the library catalog to renew books and to recall books from the annex.

- She either uses Blackboard for her classes or at times a specific website dedicated to the class where professors and TAs post resources and lecture notes. "It's just being realistic to realize that not everyone will make it to every class."

Undergraduate Persona 2: Simon
"Getting the job done"

Background

Simon is a junior in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. At this point in his academic career, Simon is focused on courses for his major, which include an array of life sciences courses plus some psychology courses for a minor. Simon is very focused on course work and "getting the job done." This amounts to a fairly task oriented view of research. He takes directions from his professors and his TAs, looks up the required information, and completes the assignment. He is not given much creative license in terms of finding the answer, nor does he have much time to think about alternative ways to do it.

Right now, his research centers around using the popular internet search engines or the library web site to find journal articles. For a recent assignment, he accessed the psyc info database on the library web site, typed in the terms, got a list of articles, shopped for articles that looked interesting, accessed the articles on line, and wrote the paper. He tends to use Google for beginning searches and when he does not know too much about the topic. If he has more information and knows more, he will go directly to the more directed "search engines" on the library web site.

He does not use Wikipedia because he hears stories about inaccuracy and has been warned away by his professors. "It's sort of like the Snapple caps; half of the information is always wrong."

In terms of online functionality generally available at Cornell, Simon does use RefWorks to help him construct bibliographies for papers and he uses the full array of functionality on Blackboard for most of his classes. Blackboard is where he gets his assignments, posts his assignments when he is finished, posts comments to others about the readings, and checks his standing in the class after quizzes. In one of his classes, posting comments about the coursework was actually a requirement.

Library Interactions and Transactions

In terms of online databases and favorite tools, Simon uses the Web of Science consistently and occasionally JSTOR. He will use e-Journals if he has the exact citation.

Except for the rare occasion that a textbook is in the library on reserve, Simon does not use the physical collection in the library at all and estimates that he has asked a librarian for advice only once

in three years. "Using hard copy books is just too time consuming." The only actual books he uses are text books.

In terms of the physical resources the library offers, he uses the computers there to write and access online sources. He will work in the library for about two hours then gets bored and goes back to work in his room.

Simon typically does not have enough time to use Interlibrary Loan to get material. He is typically working at the last minute and if he can't access the information online, he will look for another resource. If the article he is looking for is not available in full text online, he will look for another article. "It's just not worth the hassle to keep searching for the original article."

Key Experiences

He typically works from home and accesses library online functionality from there. He has not found any significant differences between working at home or at school.

He finds it's easier to stick to a few databases and master those. He has not fully explored the library website in terms of functionality and is sometimes not sure what services are Cornell Library services and what services are outside of the university.

For internet searches a typical research scenario for him includes starting with a general search on Yahoo or Google. After that he will ask friends. He will typically try three online sources and then ask for advice.

Luxuries, Comforts, and Necessities

- It would be great if the libraries could send an email out to highlight the services that they offer. He is pretty sure he is not taking advantage of all the library has to offer and is aware he is not too efficient in using the online tools.

- It would be helpful if the search results in Web of Science were somehow categorized by topic or other useful way; it would also be great to see a list categorized by topic or in some way sortable rather than a list of 100 articles.

- He uses thesaurus.com and dictionary.com to improve his writing and RefWorks to manage the citations for papers he is writing.

- He uses U-Portal to access email, course grades and other university information.

- He relies on Blackboard or dedicated course websites to access his course materials.

Undergraduate Persona 3: Ben

"Little need to go beyond the basic search engines"

Key Experiences

He has been spending a good amount of time working from home lately although he is free to work everywhere since connectivity at home and at school is good and consistent.

A major task for him is sifting through internet searches and unstructured websites. "The going is very slow. There is a lot out there but it's difficult to integrate." A major task for him is to bring together experiences, logistics, geography, and activities in a single plan.

Luxuries, Comforts and Necessities

- He would like to see how the library could be better integrated into his course of study at the Hotel School and figure out how he could make better use of the resources there.

- The use of Blackboard for managing coursework between professors and students is pretty much universal in his coursework.

Background

Ben is a freshman in the School of Hotel Administration. His course of study stresses practical, hands-on interactions with real world situations and practitioners who have spent time in the field. His current coursework includes doing interviews with restaurant managers, conducting case studies, writing speeches, and doing financial planning.

Because his coursework is so applied, Ben tends to rely on information outside the university a great deal, often using commercial search engines like Yahoo and Google to locate information on a variety of US and non-US sites ranging from tourism to government regulations to business and industry. He uses Factiva to access articles in the Wall Street Journal. "There is little need to go beyond the basic search engines."

He often works collectively with other students on large group projects were the research work is divided among the team and then consolidated in a single document.

Library Interactions and Transactions

Ben's courses do not rely on the physical collections in the library although he has used the library web site a bit for online journals. "It works well enough for what I need to do but I'm aware that there are lots of resources in the libraries that I don't need to use in my major."

He has spent some time in the Hotel Administration Library and on the Library's site. He understands that the site aggregates resources from around the university that are of interest to hotel students.

He has been to a few libraries to find books on occasion. He does not ask a librarian for help however. He likes to try to figure out the tools on his own.