



The European Library: Newspaper Archive – Usability Testing

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Outline

Executive Summary

- Project Background
 - Objectives of the study
 - Our approach
 - Testing methodology
 - Recruitment
- Scenarios
- Usability testing
 - Usability issues and recommendations
 - Task Ratings
 - Post-test interview
- Summary & Next Steps

Executive Summary 1 of 2



Positive Findings

- Aggregated view of content from many sources highly valued.
- 'Map' overview consistently valued in principle.
- Date 'slider' controls within 'further search options' valued and generally easily operated.
- 'Browse by title' landing page option highly valued.
- Search results clearly delineated and illustrated.
- Facet options location and selection obvious to most participants.
- Image manipulation controls on item details pages well understood and easily operated.
- 'Content' pane valued on item details pages.

Continued...



Executive Summary 2 of 2



Key Issues

- 'Further Search Options' on landing page not easily discovered.
- Value of 'this day in History' option unclear.
- Information and navigation in 'Browse by Country' map not clearly understood.
- Search result order unclear and not configurable.
- Reading and removing selected 'Refine' filters problematic.
- No option to download or save from item details page and print option overlooked.
- No direct link back to results page from item detail page or means to move to next/previous search result.



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The European Library is currently reviewing its prototype historic newspaper interface and the project team wish to ensure that the design delivers the best possible experience for their users, providing something that is useful, usable and compelling.

The project team have asked User Vision to perform usability testing with target users in order to:

- Understand their needs and expectations
- Investigate how well the new design serves those needs
- Ensure that the historic newspaper interface is easy to use (effective and efficient) and does not inadvertently present any barriers to use
- Ensure that the structure and layout of the site is intuitive and the navigation is effective in allowing people to move through the site and find the content they need in concordance with the rest of the site.



Our approach



- Test sessions were conducted remotely in the week commencing 7th April 2014.
- **12 participants** were recruited directly by the European Library project team.
- Each reported issue includes practical recommendations for changes and future work based around test objectives.
- The final report is reviewed internally to ensure quality & clarity.



Methodology



- A pre-test questionnaire aimed to identify relevant expectations prior to viewing the website.
- In the testing sessions, the experience of using the prototype design was explored by observing users as they conduct 'tasks' on the website, using pre-determined scenarios outlined by User Vision and agreed with The European Library to represent typical and expected tasks.
- A brief post-test questionnaire explored reactions to the site design and tools explored in the task scenarios, focusing on ease of use, understanding of purpose, navigation, clarity and overall page layout and design.
- Each test lasted 60 minutes. Participants were asked to 'think aloud' as they performed the task.
- The moderator recorded participants' actions and also probed on areas or issues that were raised or observed as causing concern and discussed how these problems may be overcome, both during and after the tests.



Recruitment



- 12 participants were recruited directly by The European Library from the following countries:
 - UK
 - Latvia
 - Austria
 - Italy
 - Finland.
- All participants selected had either an existing professional or strong personal interest in the content of the newspaper archive.



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Task scenarios 1 of 2

1. Landing page – exploratory

 The European Library has launched an online historical newspaper archive. You would like to know more so visit the website to investigate further. [Note: No specific target for this task]

2. Basic keyword search

 You are involved in a project investigating the history of the capital city of the country you currently work in. Use the site to find articles that might be of use for this project.

3. Refinement/facets [starting on results page from Task 2]

 From this list of items, you would now like to see only newspapers that were originally published in the country you are currently working in. Use the site to show only these items.



Task scenarios 2 of 2



4. Search within date range

 You are involved in research covering the period between the end of World War 1 and the start of World War 2. Use the site to find newspapers within this period.

5. Search for specific date

 You are investigating your family history and are interested in contemporary events around the birth dates of your parents. Use the site to find out which articles were published on the date of birth of either of your parents.

6. Newspapers by title/region

 To support a piece of research you are currently involved in, you want to find all of the newspapers published in Austria. Use the website to do this.



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Task Ratings: Task success



- Overall full or partial success rate was high for most tasks.
- However, the need to access the often overlooked 'further search options' to complete Task 4 led to a lower success rate here.
- Note: No specific target was recorded for Task 1 as participants were encouraged to explore the site openly during this task.
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Task Ratings: Ease of use





- Ratings for basic functions were were very much to the positive end of the scale.
- Tasks that involved accessing the 'further options' on the landing page and usage of the facets were rated lower here due to some frustration experienced.
- Issues interpreting and navigating the map are reflected in the Task 6 rating.



Pre-test interview

Pre-test interview



- Participants were asked before attempting the tasks what they expected to be able to do when accessing an online historical newspaper archive.
- The most frequently mentioned actions people expected to be able to perform in a site like this were:
 - Search filtered by:
 - Date
 - Region
 - Publication title
 - Subject area
 - Historical period
 - Language.
 - Global keyword search.



Ranking of Usability Issues



Issues are identified and advice given on resolving problems. The issues have been classified as follows:

Category	Definition
Ρ	Positive finding - This approach is recommendable and should be preserved.
н	High Severity problem - Likely to cause a problem that frequently prevents users from completing their task or will greatly annoy them. Important to fix this soon.
Μ	Medium severity problem - Likely to cause some temporary confusion that delays users from reaching their goal with the site for some considerable time (30 secs – 1 minute), and causing some degree of frustration/irritation, but unlikely to prevent them from reaching their goal.
L	Low severity problem - Cosmetic or minor problem that may cause users to hesitate or be distracted for a few seconds.

In addition, findings may also be denoted as follows:

OObserved issue - Usability or accessibility issue noted by the facilitator but not by any of the
participants in the testsIInformation - Interesting information provided by the participants that may have a bearing on
the design of the site but does not represent an issue.

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General

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General – Positives 1 of 2





Aggregated view of content from many sources highly valued (P) There was a strong positive reaction to the availability of the archive. The current need to search within various providers' sites was a barrier to both participants with a professional and a personal interest in the content due to the extra time and effort required to access it. The aggregated search possible via the newspaper archive was therefore very welcome to participants with many saying they would be keen to return to the site as the content expands.





General – Positives 2 of 2

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Boundary between Newspaper Archive and wider site generally clear (P/L) Participants who did stray into the wider site were generally able to recognise this and to navigate their way back to the newspaper archive.

The most common routes to the wider site were via the blue tabs such as 'Everything' and 'Full text'.

Although not strictly within the scope of this round of testing, the labels for these tabs were a little too ambiguous to be quickly understood by participants and could potentially cause navigation issues for some.

Recommendation: Investigate any potential confusion arising from the tab labelling here in subsequent rounds of testing.





General – Information 1 of 3



First instinct/preference to use search to access content (I)

The first task presented to participants was very 'open' with little direction given and no specific target defined. This offers insight into participants' natural first steps or primary intentions within the site.

Although participants noticed and commented on the various 'browse' options, the first step for most when accessing content was to use the search function. Most commonly this was via the basic search function.

In a minority of cases the 'Further' options were used if the link had been discovered by the participant.

When asked, the most common reason given for choosing to search rather than browse was the greater control this gave over their route through content on the site. Many participants quickly became overwhelmed by the volume of results initially presented via the 'Browse' routes.

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General – Information 2 of 3



Expectations of functionality once logged in (I)

Many participants expected to be able to create an account on the site, with some noticing the 'Log In' link in the banner area.

There was a consistent expectation amongst participants of additional functionality that should be available to registered users of the archive.

The most commonly suggested features were:

- 'Saved searches'/search history
- 'Content locker' for saved items
- 'What's new?' what's been added since the last time I logged in?
- Settings at account level for result order and thumbnail 'zoom' level.
- Some form of newsletter or 'push' notification of new content (perhaps within user-selected topics of interest) to avoid having to regularly 'manually' check for new or interesting content.

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General – Information 3 of 3



No attempt to, or expectation of the ability to, edit URLs directly (I) Participants demonstrated no desire to be able to easily read or edit URLs directly in order to access records. When asked about the URLs generated by the system, the majority stated that they had not noticed them and that they were more or less as expected on a site of this nature. 🗲) 🛞 www.theeuropeanlibrary.org/tel4/newspapers/issue/3000073486576?hp=2&count=10&page=2&query=wien&y=617.0} 🏠 🗸 C 🛛 😵 Google Q E - + For Current Partners About Log in English (en) he European Search all European Library content Advanced search GO Library HOME DISCOVER SERVICES FOR RESEARCHERS Home
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Landing page

Landing page – Positives 1 of 3



'Map' overview consistently praised in principle (P)

The principle of a visual geographical overview of the scope of the site's content was highly valued.

The ability to search or browse by geographical location tied in with many participants' expectations of what they would be able to do on the site. Presenting this option graphically further enhanced its attractiveness to participants. However, in use there were a number of issues, described in more detail later in this section of the report.

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Landing page – Positives 2 of 3



Date 'slider' controls within 'further search options' valued and generally easily operated (P/L)

Participants were able to easily understand and operate the slider controls to define a date range for results as required for Task 4 ('Search within date range').

Also, many participants discovered unprompted that they could input start and end dates directly and that they could tab between the input boxes when doing so.

A small number of participants had minor initial difficulties selecting exact dates using the sliders but were quickly able to overcome this. When asked, most of these individuals claimed that the difficulties were more likely to stem from inaccuracies in the physical input device being used (mouse or trackpad) as they had similar difficulties with this type of interaction elsewhere.

Recommendation:

Include date range selection in tasks for the second round of testing to more clearly establish if any date selection issues are more likely to be related to interface design or input device.

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Landing page – Positives 3 of 3



'Browse by title' highly valued (P/M) The option to 'Browse by Newspaper Title' was positively received by participants and aligned closely with their expectations of how they would be able to navigate the content within the archive.

However, the 'See all titles...' link was repeatedly overlooked with may participants either initiating a keyword search or clicking on the 'Content' tab when trying to locate a list of all available newspaper titles.

Recommendations:

- Place the 'Browse by Newspaper Title' higher on the landing page to reflect its status as one of the most valued and well-used entry points to the site content
- Align the 'See all titles...' link with the list of titles to make it less likely that it will be overlooked by users.

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Landing page – Issues 1 of 6



'Further options' not easily discovered (M)

Some participants had significant difficulty locating the 'Further Search Options required to successfully complete Task 4 (Search within date range). When these individuals did discover this, or were directed towards it, many claimed they had not noticed the text or that they did not associate the label 'Further Search Options...' with the advanced search features they were looking for. It is likely that there are several other factors contributing to this issue:

- Location/alignment:
 - The 'Further...' text is not aligned horizontally or vertically with the search input box or button.
- Font text not bold or prominent enough:
 - The text label does not stand out on the page as it is in the same colour and font as items in the breadcrumb trail.
- '[+]' symbol not familiar in this context:
 - While the '[+]' symbol was familiar to many when navigating tree structure views for example, its inclusion here did not help participants to quickly recognise the hidden search options.

Recommendations:

Many participants felt that these options could usefully be included in the default view for the landing page. A mock-up of how the landing page could look with some suggested revisions is included at the end of this section of the report.





Landing page – Issues 2 of 6



Date range resets when additional 'further' filter options selected (L)

Once participants had accessed, or been directed towards, the 'further search options' several selected the date range specified in the task and then chose to add a further refinement such as the source library or language.

Once they had selected one of these further options, the date range they had selected was removed and replaced by a range specific to the newly selected refinement option.

This led to some frustration and even confusion amongst participants, some of whom questioned whether they had initially selected the date range 'correctly'. **Recommendations**:

- Do not reset the date range if the currently-selected range falls within that covered by the newly selected language or source library.
- If the previously selected date range is no longer relevant once the additional filters have been selected, present a system message in red or other distinctively-formatted text. This should state whether the start or end date is now outside the previously selected range and that a new date range will therefore have to be defined before initiating the search.

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Landing page – Issues 3 of 6



Value of 'this day in History' option unclear (M) The majority of participants found that this feature added very little value beyond that already provided by the calendar 'Browse by Issue Date' function alongside it.

Also, the purpose and value of the carousel was very unclear in this context with many participants assuming that this was a static illustration rather than an interactive page element.

Recommendations:

- The 'this day in history' functionality could be replicated by including a 'Today' button in the 'Browse by Issue Date' selector.
- Given the depth and breadth of the content in the site, there seems limited value in presenting a selection of items as small as that which can usefully fit within a 'carousel' display.
- This area of the landing page could therefore be used to present an option with greater potential value to users.

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Landing page – Issues 4 of 6



Year selection requirement in 'Browse by Issue Date' unclear and operation cumbersome (M)

Several participants assumed during their initial 'exploratory' task that the 'greyed-out' appearance of the calendar meant that it was not active.

When asked in Task 5 to find items relating to a specific date, many revisited this feature. Some were then initially unclear about the requirement to select a year first.

Many also commented on the need to scroll through a very long list of items in order to get to the required year.

So this feature, while prominent did not draw participants in to the site content as successfully as it might.

Once discovered, there was curiosity about what might be contained in the archive around certain significant dates suggesting value in principle in inclusion of this option here. **Recommendations**:

- Change the input method here to a text input box with auto-suggestion. This will allow users to quickly begin typing the century and decade, at which point a list of suggested dates related to items within the archive could be shown beneath for them to select from.
- Use bolder formatting here to highlight the starting point for this process.

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Landing page – Issues 5 of 6



Information in 'Browse by Country' map not clearly understood (M) Although valued in principle as a route to content, several issues with the presentation and operation of the map arose repeatedly:

- 'Number' label ambiguous some participants guessed that this referred to the total number of related items accessible via the site. However, others were unsure as to its meaning here.
- Colours too muted Many participants mentioned that the colour palette used to signify the relative number of items available for each country was too muted, leading them to overlook some countries.
- No indication of names of 'grey' countries countries which have no related content within the site are not labelled when the cursor is moved over them. This places a burden on the user who therefore needs a good knowledge of Europe's geography to accurately identify the country they are interested in.

Recommendations:

- Change the 'Number' label to read 'Issues', 'Articles' or the more generic 'Items'.
- Use less muted colours to represent countries that have items in the database related to them
- Provide pop-over description boxes for all countries on the map, regardless of whether they are any related items in the database. The box for countries with no related items should contain the country's name and a clear indication that there are no items for that country, e.g. 'Items: 0'. These countries should still be represented in a muted colour such as the light grey currently used.



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Landing page – Issues 6 of 6

Difficulty navigating 'Browse by Country' map view (M) A number of problems were experienced when navigating the map view:

- Reason for inclusion of 'Asia' and 'World' views unclear many participants understood the value and relevance of the default 'Europe' view but were much less clear as to why the options of 'World' and 'Western Asia' were included on a site for the European Library
- Default view too small there were repeated complaints that the default scale for the map view was too small and that this made selecting some of the smaller or more tightly-grouped countries too difficult. Some participants hoped to alleviate this by using the 'zoomed' view but found that this shows only a world view with European countries therefore presented at a similar, or even slightly smaller, scale than that in the default European view.

Recommendations:

- Either remove the 'World' and 'Western Asia' views or provide a link to an explanation of why these views have been included.
- Provide a larger default view of the map on the landing page.
- Continue to provide a 'Zoom' option in the smaller map view underneath the 'Refine' facet options on results pages but ensure that this applies only to the region selected (if more than one is retained).





Landing page – Alternative layout 1 of 2



Clearer access to advanced search options • Large tabs make 'further' options more obvious. • Includes functionality currently in 'Browse by Issue Date' and 'Explore'. Detailed view on next page	About Membership For Current Pathers Log in English (en) Image: Search all European Library content Image: Search All search Image: Search Newspapers Image: Search	This illustrates one approach to address a number of the issues experienced by participants during this round of testing. 'Title' browse options more obvious • Higher position on page. • 'See all titles' link
 Larger map view Higher on the landing page so more likely to be noticed and used. Makes country selection easier. Negates the need for 'Zoom' view. Potentially irrelevant links to other regions also removed. 	Browse by Country Image: Construct of the structure of the structu	now aligned with other text and with more whitespace surrounding it.

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W uservision

Landing page – Alternative layout 2 of 2



'Specific date' and 'Date range' options

- 'Specific date' shows current 'Browse by Issue Date' calendar input. This would now produce a date output rather than initiating a search. The user can then choose whether to add keywords or initiate the search using the 'Search Newspapers' button.
- **'Date range'** reveals the view shown here. User can define the granularity of the search period by choosing to leave 'Day' or 'Month' settings at default. Once a 'Day' has been selected, a search could not be initiated without the Month also being selected.

Clider control for	Home → Newspapers Home PROTOTYPE Explore Content for Search Newspapers Search Newspapers Date of publication Start All text ▼ All libraries ▼ All languages Date of publication Start Any Day ▼ Any Day ▼ Any Month ▼ Any Month ▼ Any Month ▼	 Scope filters aligned with input box Clear indication of currently selected options.
Publication year	Year Year Search Newspa	Distinctive and
 Popular and easily- used slider controls 		descriptive label for call to action
 Affect only the year displayed in the text input boxes in 'Start' and 'Finish' columns. 	 'Reset' button Search terms and filters persistent until manually reset by the user. 	 Go' label in global nav. Unambiguous description of action.



Results page

Results page – Positives 1 of 3



Results clearly delineated and illustrated (P)

Participants were able to distinguish results easily with no indication of confusion over which related elements such as short descriptions or thumbnail images were attached to each result.

The image thumbnails were also judged to be at a scale sufficient to give some indication of the location of the item within the document (principally via the inclusion of a masthead for results on front pages for example).



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Results page – Positives 2 of 3



Facet options location and selection obvious to most (P) The majority of participants noticed the 'refine' options on their first viewing of a results page. Those that did not were

quickly able to locate these options.

Participants also understood how to access and select relevant items in this area to generate a results list more relevant to their needs.

Similar caveats apply to the map view here as on the landing page but again its inclusion was valued in principle by participants.





Results page – Positives 3 of 3



'More occurrences' option appreciated (P)

Although not used by any of the participants unprompted, when asked most participants were able to predict accurately what they would see when they clicked on these links.

Participants valued their inclusion, saying that this could help them to locate relevant content more easily.

There was also a positive reaction to the presentation of these results on the page with enough context being given by the link name and short description to enable participants to assess their relative value.



Wiener Zeitung / 01 Apr 1870/ Page 6

"ist, von Bombay kommend, am 30/ d. M. von Port Said nach Trieft abge gangen. Telegraphische Kursberichte. Pest, 31. Marz. (Officielle Schlußcurse.) Anglo-Hungarian-Bank 103/z. — Ungarische Kreditbank 93^ — Alföld-Bahn 175 >/z. — Ung. Eifenbahnanl. 109 — Nordostbahn 166. — Wiener Tramway





Results page – Issues 1 of 5

Result order unclear and not configurable (H) Some of the most commonly-voiced complaints from all participants across the whole site related to the lack of indication of the ordering of results and the lack of control over that order. While no consensus emerged regarding a default ordering preference, all participants expected to be presented with at least an option to re-order results in ascending or descending order alphabetically or chronologically.

Recommendations:

- Display a prominent mechanism to control the order of results on the page.
- This could take the form of a dropdown selection box in the location indicate by the green box on the image to the right.
- This would show the default order displayed (for example, 'Relevance') with options to order by Title (ascending and descending) and Publication date (ascending and descending).







Results page – Issues 2 of 5

Truncated 'Contributor' facet labels led to confusion (M)

Participants mentioned that they would have difficulty consistently selecting the correct 'Contributor' item in the 'Refine' options as several of the truncated labels read 'National Library ...'. Some participants quickly discovered that holding the cursor over the truncated name revealed the full name in a 'tooltip'. Even these participants, however, felt frustrated at the extra effort required to do something they considered a relatively basic function and were also concerned how the amount of effort would scale upwards if they had a large number of searches to complete. **Recommendations:**

- Increase the number of characters viewable in the truncated version of the label. Test these limits with likely contributor names and newspaper titles.
- Re-arrange the naming order in these labels so that the unique, geographical or naming element is at the start, followed by the more generic institution type. For example:
 - Finland, National Library of
 - Latvia, National Library of
 - Belgrade, University of.







Results page – Issues 3 of 5

Action to remove selected filters not obvious (M)

Participants were asked, or attempted unprompted, to widen the search once they had applied filter refinements to a results page. None of the participants were able to do so quickly.

Some happened to move their cursor over the text above the list of available facets. The change in the formatting of the text when this happened to a red colour with strikethrough made the action to remove a selected facet clearer to them.

Those that did not do this were left with no obvious means of widening the search parameters other than retrying the search from scratch, which many of them did.

Recommendations:

• Add an 'x' icon to the right of each selected facet to make it more obvious how to remove it.







Results page – Issues 4 of 5

Search input box not shown on results page (M)

Once participants had performed a search, the only options available to them were to refine that search by applying free text or predetermined filters to the original list of results.

This meant that there was no obvious route to correct spelling errors, for example, without returning to the landing page and therefore resetting any previously selected refinements. This also led some participant to attempt to change their search terms by using the global search input box in the banner area.

Recommendations:

- Place a search input box at the top of the column containing search results.
- Populate this with the original search term(s) entered.





Results page – Issues 5 of 5



No option to re-paginate results (L)

Another expected means of controlling how results are displayed that many participants felt was missing from the site is re-pagination. In other words, a control mechanism for the number of results shown on each page. The current fixed amount is 10 results per page. Several participants mentioned that they were frustrated when comparing results by having to switch between results pages in order to do so. **Recommendations:**

- Display a prominent mechanism to control the order of results on the page.
- This could be aligned with the result ordering control described earlier in this section of the report.

Everything	Newspapers Co	ollections	Full text	Remote Search	REFINE	
are looking at	10 items out of 200,335 for wier	n		III 🖬 🔽 📑 🕂 🤇 0	Search within results	60
					Contributor	
iener 🏶 Jeilung.	Wiener Zeitung / 01 Apr 1870/ Amtlicher Theil. Nichtamtliche Reichsrathe. Parla mentarisch Gesetzgebender Körper. Groß Personalnachrichten. Notizen. [+] More occurrences	Austrian National (101,811) Teßmann Library (89,389) National Library (4710) National Library (3586) National Library (817) University of Bel (22) Newspaper Title				
Matheo Walt Talkana	Wiener Zeitung / 06 Jul 1865/	Decades of Publication				
Mann Contain	'-, Band- und Strumpfwaaren, o	Country of Contributor	1			
	100 Kettenfaden auf den Wier als: Battiste .Gaze, Linon' und unter K genannten _ 75 —	Language	1			
	[+] More occurrences	COUNTRY OF CONTRIBUTOR				
Diener 🏶 Jeilung.	Wiener Zeitung / 18 Feb 1865/ wird, gestern der königlichen F Abends Ball bei Sr. Excellenz Majestät bis nach 11 Uhr ver v brachte den wesentlichen Inha	/ Page 1 Familie Ab schied dem k. k. Gesar veilten. Die "Wie n It des am 6, Feb	Isbesuche; Mittag otten Baron Werr n erZeitung " vom ruar d. I. zu	gs war Familiendiner, ier, woselbst Ihre 10. d. M. Nr. 33		

Handelsgerichte, Wilhelm Grasen Jerningham, taxfrei den Titel und Charakter eines Ober-Landesgerichtsrathes aller- gnädigst zu verleihen geruht. Se. k. k



Detail pages

Detail pages – Positives 1 of 3







Detail pages – Positives 2 of 3





Mouse control of zoom works well (P) Participants commented positively on the ability to change the zoom level of the image using the mouse scroll wheel.

Many also commented that although they had experienced similar controls elsewhere, the 'stepped' increments between zoom levels seemed to be better judged here requiring neither excessive scrolling nor more steps between the current zoom levels.

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Detail pages – Positives 3 of 3



'Content' pane valued (P)

The presence of scanned text from the original document was valued by most participants.

Although there was some minor confusion and irritation related to this feature (addressed in detail later in this section of the report) the overall reaction to inclusion of this feature was very positive.

No participants mentioned unprompted that they would expect to be able to submit corrections to the scanned text via the website.

When asked, however, many said that they had seen this feature elsewhere and that they understood and appreciated its value.







Detail pages – Issues 1 of 6

No option to download/save item (H)

Much of the value of the site to participants was provided by the images of the documents.

Participants expected to be able to save a 'local' copy once they had located content of relevance.

This was generally expected to be in an image format such as a JPEG which would limit potential file size while maximising compatibility with image viewing or manipulation tools.

As no download facility is provided, this led to some frustration and undermined the overall potential value of the site for some participants.

This issue was further exacerbated as right-clicking on the image to save produces an overlay describing the possible actions to manipulate the image, not the contextual menu expected by participants.

Recommendations:

- Include a 'Save/Download' option via a prominent icon adjacent to, or overlaid on, the image view. The option should be given to save the whole document or just the current page.
- File format should be selectable with the default being JPEG.
- Saved files should include relevant meta-data:
 - Article title
 - Newspaper title
 - Date of publication.
- If a file cannot be saved for copyright reasons, this should be explicitly outlined in a popover accessed via a link labelled 'Why can't I download this item?' or similar.





Detail pages – Issues 2 of 6



Home → Newspapers Home PROTOTYPE → Newspapers Gallery → Newspaper "Cur-Liste Bad Ischl" → 18 August 1874 'Print' option not obvious (M) THIS ISSUE PROVIDED BY NEWSPAPER SOURCE A frequently requested feature whose 🗢 🔤 🗾 🗮 🚺 🔵 presence on the page was often overlooked Cur-Liste Bad Ischl was the 'Print' option. THE NATIONAL ← 18 August 1874 → The placement of a very small icon in line LIBRARY OF FINLAND 1 of 8 pages → → with the social media sharing links at the top See Original at Library ... of the page meant that this feature was ISCHLER CER-LISTE overlooked by all but one of the 12 CONTENT participants in this first round of testing. Herr Sigmund Trebitsch Fürtrug Recommendations: Herr Sigmund Trebitsch. Fabriks-inhaber Schwägerin, aus Wien Schwägerin, aus Wiel Provide a more prominent print icon on Krupitz 214 the detail page. This should be available in 3313 10000 Herr Luigo Richini, Minnike 3 both the default and full-screen views so 1074 mit Sohn, aus Wien could be overlaid on the image. do Herr Luigo IC ich in i . Mimiker des Wien • If this is not possible, place this option mit Sohn, aus Wien Herr Ch. Pread, Rentier, mit outside the preview window in the default Unterberger Jainzen 41 •) und Kourier, aus England view but closely aligned with the image 1075 window to make both its presence and 6. August Herr Aladar Graf Andrassy, aus purpose more obvious. Herr Ch. Pread, Rentier, mit Begleiter He und Kourier, aus England Herr Rudolf Ritter von War Hotel Bauer 1076 Dienerin, aus Graz 29. Juli I Herr Aladar Graf Andrassy, aus Pest Frau Katharina Grinim, Private Hotel Elisabeth •> 1077 : Frau Gräfin Nemes, geborne Ba 30. Juli



Detail pages – Issues 3 of 6





No 'Back to my results' or similar link (M) Once they had finished studying a detail page, participants were frustrated that there was no obvious means of returning to the results page.

This meant that they were reliant on the browser back button, a particular issue if they had clicked through various views on the detail page and therefore had a number of steps to re-trace to get back to the results page.

Recommendations:

- Provide a clear, dedicated 'Back to my results' link.
- This should return users to the source results page for the current item with any 'Refine' options still selected.





Detail pages – Issues 4 of 6





No means to move directly to next result (M)

A frequently repeated request on this page was to be able to move directly to the previous or next result within the current search results list.

This would facilitate assessment of a refined list of results without having to move back and forth between the results and detail pages, potentially risking the user losing their place in the sequence of results.

Recommendations:

- Provide 'Next result' and 'Previous result' text links on each 'Item detail' page.
- These could be placed to the top right and left of the area above the image as indicated by the green boxes on the screenshot to the left.



Detail pages – Issues 5 of 6



Horizontal scrolling required within 'Content' pane (M)

While the 'Content' pane was valued by many participants, almost all mentioned that the restricted horizontal width of the window and the lack of line wrapping to fit the window width made the text very difficult to read.

Some participants copied the text into a text editor to read it more easily but many mentioned that the horizontal scrolling required to view this on the web page would discourage them from reading it altogether.

Recommendations:

• Ensure that text within this pane wraps correctly to avoid the need for horizontal scrolling.





Detail pages – Issues 6 of 6



'More about this text' link often overlooked (L)

The link describing the source and limitations of the OCR text was often overlooked by participants due primarily to its location and the muted formatting of the text link. **Recommendations**:

- Include a more easily recognisable indicator of contextual information such as an 'i' icon next to the 'Content' heading.
- An example of how this could be presented is shown on the screenshot to the right.





Outline

- Executive Summary
- Project Background
 - Objectives of the study
 - Our approach
 - Testing methodology
 - Recruitment
- Scenarios
- Usability testing
 - Task Ratings
 - Usability issues and recommendations
 - Post-test interview
- Summary & Next Steps



Q1. How does the site relate to your expectations before you started?

Far above expectation	Above expectation	Slightly above expectation	Neutral	Slightly below expectation	Below expectation	Far below expectation
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		3.3				

- The average rating here was 3.3, just to the negative side of 'Slightly above expectations'.
 - When asked why they had given a certain rating here, many participants said that they had very high expectations of the quality of experience and breadth of content available via The European Library site.
 - Despite these high expectations, and some issues encountered during the tasks, the overall experience was still slightly above their expectations, indicating the value and quality of the site offering for these participants.





Q2. How does this compare with other sources of similar information that you have seen in the past?



- The average rating here was 2.6, just to the negative side of the mid-point between 'Better' and 'Slightly better'.
 - Many participants found it difficult to give a rating here. This was primarily due the need to compare their first use of this site with prolonged periods of often intensive use of other sources of information both online and in the organisations where they worked.
 - A frequent comment here was that they believed the European Library site would fare better on first use for basic searches than many alternatives they had seen but that some of the issues locating, and navigating between, results might lead to frustration for them in the longer term.





Q3. If you were to mention 3 things you like about the website, what would they be?

- By far the most common response here was the breadth and depth of content available in one place.
- Other common responses included:
 - Ease of performing a basic search
 - Browse by title option on landing page
 - Map view (with caveats relating to information presentation and navigation)
 - Ease with which newspaper images could be manipulated on the item detail pages.





Q4. If you were to mention 3 things you dislike or would change, what would they be?

- The most common responses to this question related to:
 - Carousel view on the landing page:
 - Specifically its unclear context (was it related to 'this day in history') and unclear thumbnail images.
 - Difficulties locating the advanced search options on the landing page.
 - Frustration on search results pages when:
 - Re-ordering search results
 - Managing filter options
 - Moving between results
 - Performing a new search without resetting previously selected filter options.





Q5. Is there anything else that you think it would be useful for the site to provide?

- Again, a common theme emerged here around the ability to download images or entire documents from the site.
- Some more advanced users also mentioned that they found even the 'further' search options restrictive in comparison to some other sites they had used:
 - In particular, the option to 'stack' search terms in the way currently possible in the global European Library advanced search was seen as an oversight.
- Other suggestions included:
 - A clear route for giving feedback about the site, either through a web form or email link.
 - A description of the benefits and additional functionalities available once you are a registered user of the site.
 - A 'What's New?' section highlighting recently added content.



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Summary 1 of 2



Understanding user needs and expectations:

- Participants' focus was very much on how well the site supported their personal search strategies rather than following the browse options available from the landing page.
- They wanted clear search options to help them quickly filter what they expected to be an extensive and high quality collection of material.

How well the new design serves those needs:

- Despite some frustration with navigation and presentation elements, the overall response to the site was positive.
- However, some participants did voice concerns that relatively minor initial frustrations could become barriers to their regular use of the site over time.

Continued...





Summary 2 of 2

Interface ease of use:

- Basic search functions worked well.
- The browse options offered from the landing page were less consistently successful.
- Attention is also required in the options presented to initiate, order and refine searches.

Structure and layout:

- Participants had little difficulty moving between sections of the site.
- As mentioned, navigation between search results was more problematic.
- Participants were generally easily able to recognise when they had strayed beyond the confines of the newspaper archive and could make their way back to it when required.







- Address the issues identified here in priority order, starting with the High and Medium Severity issues, then as many of the Low severity issues as time and resource will allow.
- The European Library has committed to a further round of usability testing as part of this project. This will help to ensure that any changes based on the current recommendations have had the desired effect and will identify any new issues that may have been introduced as a result of these changes.
- Future development should follow an iterative user centred design approach to eliminate usability and accessibility issues cost-effectively during development and ensure the user experience of the finished product will meet the needs and expectations of the user population.



Thank you



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