



Testing the new  
Library Portal | Primo (FU Berlin)  
A combined approach of expert and  
user evaluation for assessing its usability

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- Overview of our Primo
- Method of the usability study
- Examples of the results from the usability study
- Next steps
- Conclusion

# Primo Implementation FU Berlin

- Part of the KOBV consortium (Berlin-Brandenburg, Germany)
- Version 3.0.2
- Layout: conforms to university's corporate design; a lot of local modifications in the default installation
- Tab FU Catalogue plus:
  - Books: Aleph-Catalogue, SFX, Scanned Card Catalogues
  - Article: National Licenses metadata, Online content, Inst. Repository
- Primo-Central
- Metalib via Primo in a separate tab
- A beta version; problem with (complex Aleph 18) Opac via Primo

## The Study: Usability of Primo FU

- This study is a Master thesis for the postgraduate Master of Library Science (Melanie and Heike)
- Combination of (expert) heuristic evaluation and user testing
- Heuristic evaluation: detailed testing of Primo's features; preparation of the user tests by the authors
- 20 testers: students and staff, no librarians, nobody had previous knowledge of Primo
- "Thinking Aloud" method: testers were asked to solve scenario based searching tasks while thinking aloud
- Aim: to learn which features testers were able to find and use
- One participant per session, each session lasting about 1.5 hours
- Each session documented on video for additional checks
- Humboldt University's Primo was used as a reference (same consortium, comparable source)

## Scenario-Based Approach

- There were six scenarios which were aimed to encompass all major types of:
  - Queries
  - Materials (books, articles, etc)
  - Features (facets, rss, export, etc)))
- During the tests the tasks increased in difficulty and complexity
- The main aim was not to generate certain results, but rather to get an insight into the testers' strategies and Primo's usability
- 10% of the tasks were designed to be unsolvable
- Example:

"Your professor suggested, that you regularly consult the journal *American Anthropologist*.

  - > Find the electronic version of the journal
  - > ....."

# SOME RESULTS

# The Good Things

- (Our) Primo is easy to use for beginners
- Facets, RSS and Recommender are useful after some experience
- FRBR are useful
- Beginners find book covers helpful
- Enthusiasm for searching in all materials with one search
- Very positive response about direct links to full text

# Transparency of Contents and Results

FU-Catalog Plus + Primo Central Database sets (by subject)  
American Anthropologist FU-Catalog Plus + Primo Central Search

Search Limited to: All items containing my search term anywhere in the record

- Users are unaware of the contents of the two different tabs
- Users are unaware of the scope of their respective searches
- Inconsistent naming and colouring of the availability status of items
- Inconsistent attributes in detail tab (from different sources) bring additional confusion

1  **Community Building at American Anthropologist**  
Fish, AE  
American anthropologist, 2011 MAR, Vol.113(1), p.4-4 [Peer Reviewed Journal]  
**Full text available**  
View Online Details More

177  **Salt Intake, Adrenocortical Function and Hypertension**  
LEWIS K. DAHL  
In: Nature. - London [u.a.]. - 181 (1958), S. 989-990. - ISSN 1476-4687  
1958  
**Online access**

15  **American anthropologist. Special publication. American anthropologist / Special publication**  
American Anthropological Association  
Menasha, Wis. : American Anthropological Assoc.  
**Details**

3  **American Anthropologist**  
Anthropology News, 1995, Vol.36(5), p.2-2  
**Check for print version**  
Services Details

71  **[Bespr. von:] Eisenstadt, Shmuel N.: Primitive political systems: a preliminary comparative analysis, in: American Anthropologist. Menasha/Wisconsin 1959**  
Emilio Willems Shmuel N. Eisenstadt  
In: Archiv für Rechts- und Sozialphilosophie. - Stuttgart. - 47 (1961), S. 439-441. - ISSN 0001-2343, ZDB-ID 4960  
1961  
**Check for print version**  
Services Locations Details

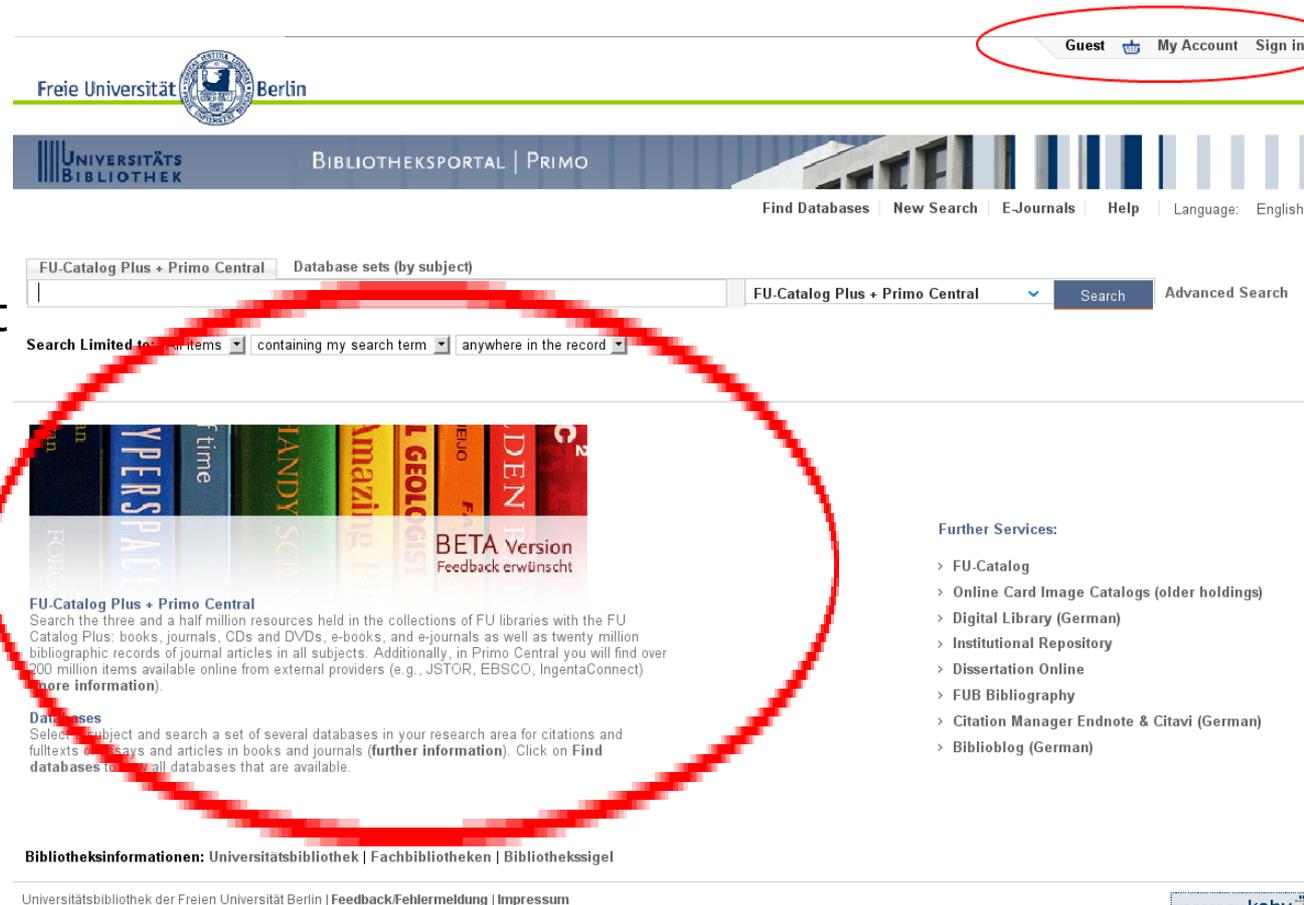


- Access to the user account (which is crucial!) is not obvious in the upper right corner

- Too much text (and possibly graphics) on the front page

- Information is not understandable due to:

- Font size and colouring
- Inconsistency
- Placement





# Too Complex

- Depending on source and situation you may find in tab 'View Online':
  - List of links
  - SFX-Menu for different targets
  - Direct link to full text
- Inconsistent and specialised terminology
- Scattered information (HU persistent navigation as an alternative)
- In the Metalib tab users need to select a quickset before searching

The screenshot displays a library catalog interface with several components:

- Search Results:** A search for "American anthropologist" yields results from the American Anthropological Association. The interface includes tabs for "View Online", "Details", and "More".
- Available Resources:** A sidebar lists various services: Resolving-System, EZB, Verlag, Verlag; Volle Digitalisierung, Digitalisierung Deutschland, Aggregator, EZB, and Read me.
- Full Text Availability:** A table shows full text available via Highwire Press National Academy of Sciences for the year 2010, band 107, heft 16, starting on page 7389.
- SpringerLink Interface:** A prominent orange banner for SpringerLink features a search bar labeled "SUCHE" and filters for "AUTOR ODER HERAUSGEBER", "PUBLIKATION", "BAND", and "HEFT".
- Database Selection:** A section titled "FU-Catalog Plus + Primo Central" shows a list of database sets (by subject) such as "epigenetic", "North American Studies", "English Language and Literature", etc., with a "Please choose a set" dropdown and a "Search" button.



# Simple and Advanced Search

- Testers had problems with the dropdown lists in the Simple Search, due to:
  - Inconsistencies in the lists
  - New search includes the old additional selection

FU-Catalog Plus + Primo Central Database sets (by subject)

American Anthropologist FU-Catalog Plus + Primo Central Search

Search Limited to: All items containing my search term as author/creator

Testers were much more comfortable with using the Google-like approach in the Simple Search and complete dropdown menu in the Advanced Search, as used in Primus Humboldt University

new search

Books, journals, articles, ... Online Catalogue ebook packages for test Search

Advanced Search

# Usability of New Features

- The symbols for the *different kinds of material* do not differ enough to be easily distinguishable
- Basket is not understandable as a symbol to select items of an own list

**Erscheinungsjahr**

- o vor 1957 (15.754)
- o 1957 bis 1970 (12.418)
- o 1970 bis 1983 (14.114)
- o 1983 bis 1996 (21.581)
- o nach 1996 (30.829)

**Bibliothek**  
Zeige 9 weitere v

**Sprache**  
Zeige 8 weitere v

**Datenbanken**  
Zeige 13 weitere v

**Artikel in Zeitschrift**  
Zeige 23 weitere v

**RVK-Klassifikation**  
Zeige 4 weitere v

**DDC-Klassifikation**  
Zeige 10 weitere v

**Vorschläge für neue Suchen**

**von diesem Autor:**

- o Buikstra, Jane E.
- o Boellstorff, T
- o Borofsky, Robert
- o Kuen, PV
- o Borofsky, R

**mit diesem Schlagwort:**

- o Anthropology
- o Cultural anthropology--Research
- o Anthropological research--Analysis
- o Anthropology--Research
- o Anthropological research--Methods

 RSS

Artikel **Volltext verfügbar**

Online Ressource Details Weitere Services

7  **The Four Subfields: Anthropologists as Mythmakers**  
Borofsky, Robert  
American Anthropologist, Jun., 2002, Vol.104, p.463-480 [Peer Reviewed Journal]  
**Volltext verfügbar**

Artikel Online Ressource Details Empfehlungen Weitere Services

8  **American anthropologist**  
Washington, D.C. American Anthropological Association  
**Online-Zugriff frei**

Zeitschrift Online Ressource Details Weitere Services

9  **On nature and the human.(VITAL TOPICS FORUM)(Author abstract)(Essay)**  
Fuentes, Agustin ; Marks, Jonathan ; Ingold, Tim ; Sussman, Robert ; Kirch, Patrick V. ; Brumfiel, Elizabeth M. ; Rapp, Rayna ; Ginsburg, Faye ; Nader, Laura ; Kottak, Conrad P.  
American Anthropologist, Dec, 2010, Vol.112(4), p.512(10) [Peer Reviewed Journal]  
**Volltext verfügbar**

Artikel Online Ressource Details Weitere Services

10  **Anthropology Becoming ... ? The 2010 Sociocultural Anthropology Year in Review**  
Hamilton, JA ; Placas, AJ  
American anthropologist, 2011 JUN, Vol.113(2), p.246-261 [Peer Reviewed Journal]  
**Volltext verfügbar**

Artikel Online Ressource Details Weitere Services

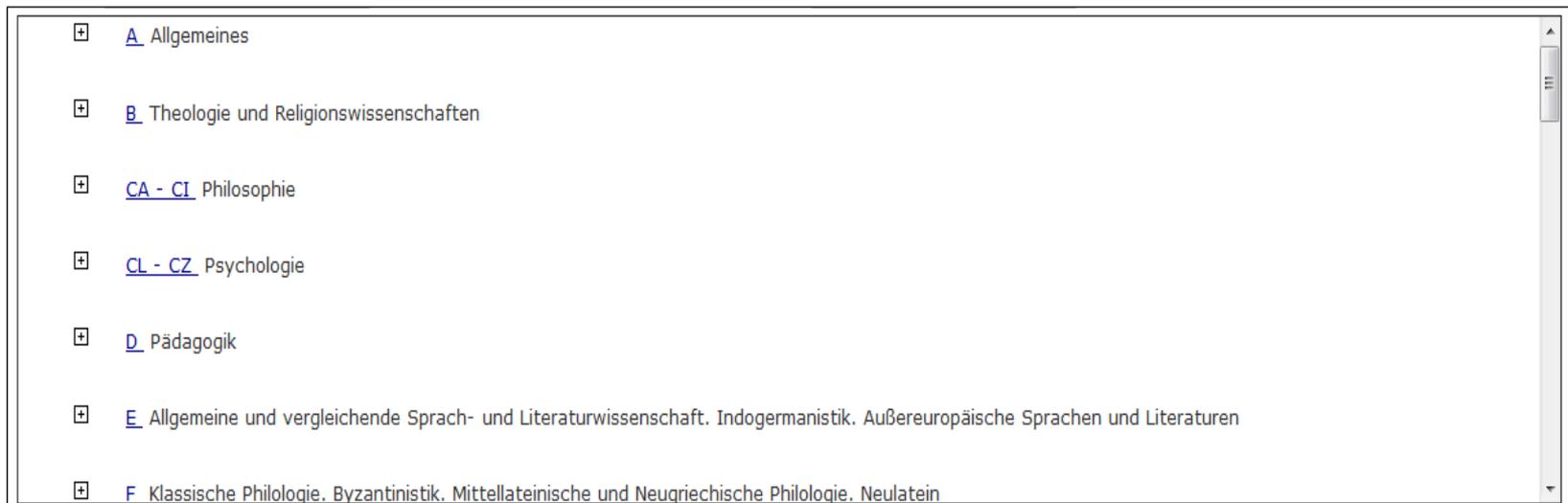
**89.876** Ergebnisse für **FU-Katalog Plus + Primo Central** sortiert nach: **Relevanz** v 1-10 Vor ->

Weitersuchen im KOBV? Fernleihe?

- Invisibility of new features is particularly problematic

## Features Lacking

- Context-sensitive with mouse over help (i.e.: In the MetaLib tab: “select a quickset before searching”) just in some cases – need more
- System status indicator
- Contact information
- Personalisation
- Browsing: with Thesaurus (DDC, RVK(German classification)...) – there is a project with ÖBV about RVK browsing



## And Now...

- Operationalization of problems:
- We start to bring all issues in a bug-tracking system (Redmine)  
About 200 expected issues
- We need to deduplicate, evaluate and qualify the issues (involving the technical staff)
- Possibilities:
  - Improve our beta version
  - Create the new productive version considered to all issues (Aleph20/Primo 4??)
- English short version with method, scenarios?

## Conclusion

- In this usability study we show, that primo has a high potential
  - 93 % of test scenarios successfully solved
  - Easy learning of the system
  - Positive response for the new features
- The method and design of this usability study was very effective in uncovering usability problems, particularly from the user-perspective.
- The method and design of this usability study can be used by other sites for their own checks