

User Needs – Update January 2007

Background

- The User Needs subgroup met during the RRS Forum in Denver February/March 2006. Results:
 - Discussion/agreement that a single person may have different needs when searching for information depending upon the purpose for which that information is needed. That is, it is less helpful to group users by type of library, location, or age and more helpful to consider their needs based upon purpose for information seeking.
 - Next Steps:
 - Identify existing research/publications from which we can pull information about user needs
 - Identify any gaps in the existing literature regarding user needs
 - Based on results of research, define personae and/or use cases
 - Building from use cases/personae, develop a service framework for information seeking from the user perspective
 - Determined that the Interoperability subgroup would benefit from the results of any research as it could be applied to the interface for the Get It tool. Additionally, determined that results of any research may be useful to the Policies sub-group as they consider the impact of user needs on library policies.

2006 Progress

- Some potential sources of existing research were identified (a bibliography was created from a search of periodical indexes, plus titles and papers were identified by members of the User Needs subgroup)
- No review of the literature or existing research was completed.
- Due to lack of activity and available volunteers, the User Needs Subgroup was disbanded in mid-2006
- December 2006 – New co-chairs were identified to reactivate the User Needs subgroup (Heather Clark, Angela Thomas).
- January 16, 2007 – Phone meeting with Heather Clark, Angela Thomas, and Gina Persichini to pass along information on previous User Needs activities to the new co-chairs.

Potential Future Activities

- Research user behavior for the purpose of defining user needs and user personae in the areas of information access and resource sharing. (Possible interest from STARS Research & Statistics Committee to work with User Needs Subgroup on this.)