Beyond Gate Counts:

Using Photo Surveys To See How Your Patrons Really Use Library Space

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Slides: http://library.edgewood.edu/waal2016
About Us

Edgewood College
• Catholic (Dominican) college in Madison since 1927
• Undergrad, Grad, & PhD programs
• 2300 FTE students – 550 living on campus

Library
• Built in 1990
• Primary study space on campus
• 1st floor remodeled in 2010 (Information Commons)
Problem/Research question

• Why we did the study.
Literature Review

• Beer Cans in the Stacks? Using a Photo Study to Reveal How Library Spaces are Used
  • Maura Seale ACRL 2013

• Getting the picture: Interviews and photo elicitation at Edmonton Public Library

• Active learning spaces: Insights, applications & solutions by Steelcase Education Solutions
  • Active learning ecosystems workshop sponsored by Target Commercial Interiors and Steelcase Education Solutions. May 6th, 2014
Library Ecosystem

• Private/Alone
• Public/Alone
• Public/Together
• Private/Together

Method

• Photos taken, every day for one week repeated three times.
• In “private” areas, notes were taken rather than photos.
Method

“I’m not a stalker, I’m doing a survey.”
Method

• Unique furniture uses/movements were also photographed or noted.
Method

• Survey Form & Instructions

• Free file management software used to batch rename photo files.

• Photos and notes compiled in PowerPoint file for easy review.

  Sample file
Results

• Students like to study independently in close proximity to others.
• Need for access to power – outlets were too far away
• Need for Private/Alone quiet space
• Identified current fixtures that could be repurposed/ redistributed
• Prioritized fixture purchases and space allocation
• Purchased banquette with power outlet
• Purchased study tables and installed additional power outlets
Rearranged study carrels

November 2014 – Private/Alone

Converted to Public/Alone
Purchased single tables and installed outlets on second floor railings.

Private/alone 3 seats

Private/alone 15 seats +power
Purchased banquette with power outlet

Public/Alone (big tables moved closer to outlets)

Public/Alone with power
Recommendations/Future Research

• Increase number of photos taken
• More specific direction on how to take photos (for consistency).
• Signage to alert library patrons about photos being taken
• Study to include computer workstations
• Pair with a survey/focus group
References


Thank you

• Questions?

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