User Personas
How Fake People Help Us Make Libraries Better

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Systems Librarian: Web Development/Support
UW Libraries
PERSONAS = Fake People based on real people
PERSONAS = empathy + focus + non-anecdotal
Initially used for web design
Used by librarians for service design + understanding
Updated focus on:

- tech use
- motivation
- communication
- time
I'd rather use an online article that 'kinda works' than go to the hassle of finding a book in the library.

Paul the Professional
online student

Richard the Researcher
graduate student

Sharon the Scholar
faculty

Vincent the Visitor
alumnus

BROOKE
THE BEGINNER

19 year old undergraduate
undeclared major

RESEARCH
New to the research process and academia
Uses Google and Wikipedia as first stop when doing research
Also relies on sources suggested by her instructors in class
Uses the same keywords in all the different search boxes, sometimes plays around with search options or filters

LIBRARY
Spends a lot of time in Odegaard between classes or at night studying or meeting with friends; likes all the whiteboards, computers, and comfy chairs
Uses her phone to search for hours and library location information, and also to see if the library has access to a book or article
Likes when she doesn’t always have to buy a textbook and can use an e-book to read assigned chapters

TECHNOLOGY
Uses MyUW and Canvas to access all of her school and class information
Has her smartphone with her all the time and uses it to communicate and get reminders
Relies on texting and Facebook to keep track of her friends and social activities
 Doesn’t like to carry her laptop around campus all day because it’s too heavy
Create Personas = Throw a Party!
Staff involvement = buy-in + acceptance
mountain of post-its = research time!
How true are these assumptions?
Quick portraits, no backstory needed
No one wants to design for a zombie
Workshop: services, spaces, website = IDEAL Library
A. Collections + Access:
  - as virtual as possible (e-preferred), mobile friendly
  - embedding Libs in course site
  - proxy access that works

B. Teaching/Learning
  - embedding Libs in course site (LibGuides, tutorials, toolkits)

C. Space
  - Virtual (or off-hours access to physical library)
  - promote existing partnerships for physical spaces / The Alliance

A. Help Services
  - Chat, Skype, Google Hangout, good/robust documentation for Chat Partners
Personas for everything? NO.
Update Over Time
Successful Personas = Focus on GOALS
Personas = Not Always the Right Tool
Find Out More!

• Persona Lifecycle: Keeping People in Mind Throughout Product Design – Pruitt & Adlin, 2006 (ebook thru UW)

• “A Closer Look At Personas: What They Are And How They Work” - Smashing Magazine, Aug 2014 (part 1) (part 2)

Questions?
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