A day of User Experience (UX) research methods

- Does your library conduct enough user research?
- Do you know what your users really need?
- Do you know how your users feel about your spaces and services?

Summary:
For some time now interest has been growing in a set of research methods that come under the banner heading of UX (User Experience) and offer a far more revealing and engaging alternative to the over-used and unreliable library survey. Through UX techniques such as participant observation, photo and diary studies and cognitive mapping, we can gain a more detailed and holistic picture of the lives of our students. These methods are not complex, a lot of fun to learn and crucially can help us appreciate the wider landscape of student experience.

Learning outcomes:
Participants will learn about UX and ethnography and the many research methods available to them. They will evaluate their application in their own libraries and gain crucial insight into the kind of rich data they can derive. They will also be exposed to idea generation and design-thinking methods and consider the value of divergent as opposed to convergent thinking.

Format:
During this intensive and highly practical day participants will work alone and in teams as they explore different approaches first-hand. The day starts with a plenary presentation which defines UX and ethnography, before moving into a workshop format for the majority of the day. We come together again for a reflective learning summary before the event closes.

Course contents:
1. UX and ethnography presentation: What is UX?; What is ethnography?; Attitudinal and behavioural user research; Small and large scale UX projects.
2. Observation and storytelling: Participant observation; Directed storytelling; Love and break-up letters.
3. Visual ethnography: Photo studies; Cultural probes; Photo-based interviews; Cognitive mapping.
4. Idea generation: Convergent/divergent thinking; The Anti-Problem; How-Now-Wow!; How Might We?
5. Plenary learning summary.

Feedback from UK attendees:
- Engaging, innovative, inspiring. Makes me want to go back and do this!
- A very useful and practical session that focused on real-world methodologies rather than the purely theoretical and conceptual. Andy is a great presenter – very professional and effective.
- Really positive, worthwhile and usable. Inspired to try lots of techniques back at work. Thank you! One of the best training workshops I have attended.

Attendees:
Ideally 15-25. The day works very well as a level playing field for staff at all levels and can also serve as a valuable teambuilding or networking opportunity.

About the presenter:
Andy is an experienced freelance trainer and consultant in the fields of UX, leadership, social media, and teambuilding. He also works part-time as innovation lead for the University of Cambridge Futurelib project. He originated the first international UX in Libraries conference in 2015 and his book with the same title will be published in Spring 2016. LinkedIn: https://uk.linkedin.com/in/andypriestner

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