Since launching in Fall of 2015 as the UW Libraries’ main discovery system, Ex Libris Primo has not been subjected to formal usability testing. Additionally, the UW Triennial Survey showed high dissatisfaction and negative feedback regarding the current search experience.

In order to improve user experience, we conducted user testing, analyzed the data, and provided design recommendations that could be implemented before the release of the newest iteration of Primo (Fall 2017).

**Phase 1**
Fall 2016

**Phase 2**
Winter 2017
Testing Beta

**Phase 3**
Spring 2017
A/B Testing

User tests were conducted in Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters. In each quarter, 12 participants (6 undergraduates, 3 graduates, 3 faculty/staff) performed a variety of search tasks. Morae was the usability testing software used to record sessions and collect data. The data was then analyzed to inform our team’s design recommendations.

Most users found the beta interface to be a positive change, and many remarked on the cleaner aesthetics. Pain points were found around the misleading “Articles, Books, and More” dropdown, as well as the oddly placed pushpin, leading to most users missing it entirely.

For clarity, rearrange the “References” area to:
Sources cited in this
Sources citing this

**Recommendations**

1. Move the pushpin icon from the upper right side to the Share/Save area
2. Remove “Article, Books, and More” from location dropdown
3. Adhere to accepted usability guidelines and user expectations

**Additional Recommendations**

- Change the “References” section to “Find References”
- For clarity, rearrange the “References” area to read:
  - Sources
  - Sources cited in this
  - Sources citing this
- Allow users to choose more than one facet at once, without needing to reload after every click
- Assess pages for unnecessary library jargon, as well as idiomatic phrasing such as “tweak my results” which could confuse non-native English speaking researchers.

**Next Steps/Further Research**

- More users in the hard sciences need to be tested.
- International students were not tested, and thus are not represented in our results.
- Library Instruction consideration: There were several instances of users noting that they weren’t even aware that a feature was available for them before. Perhaps more time could be given to the services that are available for students during instruction sessions.