Virtual Reality in Libraries: Research Partnership Opportunities
Doralyn Rossmann
Thursday, May 14, 2020
CNI Spring Membership Meeting
Leading the Library By Looking Beyond the Library

“There is a consistent relationship between the library’s investment in initiatives that align with broader institutional missions beyond the library and how directors believe both they and their libraries are valued.”

“... at doctoral universities, directors perceive that both they and their library are more highly valued when they also perceive that their supervisors highly value their research functions. This includes the library serving as a repository of resources and providing active support to increase the productivity of faculty research and scholarship.”

From: Ithaka S+R blog post: https://sr.ithaka.org/blog/leading-the-library-by-looking-beyond-the-library/
Virtual Reality & Libraries

• Hardware provision
• Software/app provision
• Space provision
• Courses/instruction
• Expertise/referrals
Virtual Reality & Libraries

• Virtual Reality (VR) content development
• Preservation of locally-created VR content (https://www.browndailyherald.com/2020/01/28/r-hospital-utilizes-3d-augmented-virtual-reality/)
• Creation of 3-D/VR models of objects, texts
• Research opportunities
Leading the Library: Looking Beyond

• Ithaka S+R blog post
• Bigger than the library
• Not just traditional activity, but capitalizes on our abilities to:
  – Pull people and resources together
  – Help people innovate
  – Tell stories and preserve heritage
  – Advance research and science
Montana State University

- 3 emerging VR support entities:
  - Academic Technology & Outreach:
    - Teaching & Learning Technologies studio (teaching VR)
  - Library
    - Virtual Discovery Space (using VR)
  - University Information Technology
    - Montana Reality Lab (developing VR)

- Support & Synergy
  (www.montana.edu/vr)
Research Opportunities

• Case Study:
  – Computer Science Ethics Course
    • Equal Reality (https://equalreality.com/) & role of bias
    • Potential for understanding bias in:
      – Asking for information
      – Providing information
      – Interpreting information
    • Library provided location, scheduling, hardware, software
  • Conversation followed…
VR for Mitigating Bias with Libraries

- Avatars let users shape who they are – both patron & librarian
- Spaces have different dynamic
- New concept of “library”
- Still produces inequalities – hardware, internet, VR skills
- Remote/online environment
Research Opportunities

• Case Study:
  – Counseling Research
    • Remote counselors to reach people who need a counselor right away
    • Because of distance (remote)
    • Because of immobility
    • Because of limited financial resources
    • Because of suicidal thoughts
  – Library learned about through CS Bias instructor
VR for Just in Time Library Needs

- Remote Librarians to reach people who need help right away
- Because of distance (remote)
- Because of immobility
- Because of limited financial resources
- Because of time constraints
Research Opportunities

• Case Study:
    • How communication happens in a medical setting
    • Communication among key players – doctors, nurses, reception, patients
    • Understanding of patient experience and how information is gathered and communicated
Reference Interview & Patron Experience

• Patron experiences in the library
  – Entering space
  – Finding personnel
  – Asking questions
  – Getting answers
  – Accessing information
Research Opportunities

• Case Study:
    • VR to have people gather data
    • Crowdsourcing
    • Potential role of library to recruit for and participate in research studies
Research Opportunities

• Case Study:
  – MSU Engineers without Borders, Film & Photography, Library and VR & 360 Video
    • Mapping new school library in Kenya through VR
    • Storytelling: creation of 360 videos to tell story of community
    • Preserving video by the Library
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Comments? Thoughts?

Contact me:
Doralyn Rossman

doralyn@montana.edu
@doralyn on Twitter