

Te Punga and the Net Generation

Fronting up to the Challenge



Our existing Voyager catalogue tutorial was text-heavy and decontextualised—detached from student experience, youth culture and the research process.

Net Generation

- Bored with text
- Constantly connected
- Don't like being 'told'
- Exploratory learners
- Multi-media savvy

How do you get Net Gen students to engage with an essential research tool?

To address these issues we focused on:

- **Setting a target**—a specific audience of young first year undergraduates
- **Putting students at the centre** of our thinking, the content and design process
- **Deepening the pool of expertise**—found partners in learning design, web expertise and graphic design
- **Exploiting the web**—interactivity, highly visual, multiple pathways

Taking Action



The aim was to create a student-centred tutorial, applying sound learning principles, providing relevant contexts for first year students and using Net Gen modes to convey the information.

“Digital resources enable experiential learning... Simulations and visualizations allow students to explore and draw their own conclusions—another form of first-person learning.”—Oblinger and Oblinger 2005

Use Net Gen modes

- **Graphic novel**—provides structure, contexts, opportunity for active involvement; is a popular and familiar mode; encourages immersion.
- **Simulations**—opportunity for active learning and feedback
- **Role play**—user identifies with the character as they learn
- **Online guide**—Libot provides expert assistance, context and understanding

Provide for different learning styles

We achieved this by:

- Enabling construction of individual pathways
- Addressing concepts in multiple ways
- Providing various types of learning modules e.g. Enquiry Desk 'Common Queries' and 'FACTS'

Therefore the tutorial caters for more than the target audience, e.g. mature users and those wanting quick answers and specific skills



Provide contexts

- Research for a Uni assignment
- Whole library experience
- Information literacy, not just how to search
- Celebrate student culture—technological use, visual palette, colloquial language

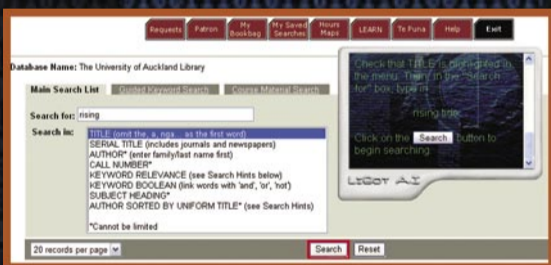
Make it student-centred

- Acknowledge student study and learning preferences
- Peer to peer learning and group work
- Relevant real-life task
- Student perspective of the library
- Use of colloquialisms and plain English
- Minimize library jargon

Apply sound learning principles

Pedagogical research and practical experience indicated that we needed to create a **learning environment** that was:

- **Participatory**—learning by doing
- **Situated**—relating to a student's existing experiences and frameworks
- **Relevant and engaging**—acknowledging real issues; immediately applicable
- Able to include **self-assessment** and provide instant **feedback**
- **Rich in content**



The Response



“Superb! Love it... Can remember a lot more this way rather than sitting for an hour listening to subject librarians go thru all this... no offence... to Subject librarians... they r cool! Just not their long tutorials... he he he.”

“Very cool way of learning! Interactive, fun and able to stick in your head! I was very impressed!”

“I found this very helpful and it was easy reading in the comic strip form. Maybe this format could be used in other tutorials?”

“Brilliant, I love it. I'm in my last year of a BA/LLB: could have used something as fun, informative and easy to use as this back in first year! The concept is novel, the graphics are slick and I particularly like the use of colloquialisms/txtng: it's relevant and it's cool.”