Lean Library (Browser Plugin) Function Usability

Study conducted on Oct 5-6, 2022 by the TTU Library UX Unit

16 students and faculty participated in this study.

Participants completed a short task and a brief interview in return for a snack and library swag.

Initial question:
How easy is it for users to request items not available in the library and use the highlight-and-search feature?

Overall, the participants loved the functionality, even though they ran into issues with usability.

- Users liked the highlight-and-search feature because it could take them right to relevant peer-reviewed research.
- Users liked how easy it was to learn how to use the plug-in to request articles.
- Users disliked how quickly the overlay would close when they needed it to stay open.
- Users faced a steep learning curve because some parts of the plugin were unintuitive.

As a result of testing, we recommended the following:

- Make sure that instructions for how to use the features do not skip steps, to assist with learning it.
- Move key features up in the right-click menu so that they are easier to see (rather than at the bottom).
- Extend the overlay timer so that those messages stay up for long enough.

Changes in the Library:
Updated the plug-in before letting users download.

We want library patrons to use this browser plug-in to make it easier to access resources when off campus. Given the need for some improvements, we worked with our other library units to adjust the plug-in settings that were within our control. Those went live in Fall 2022, so drop us a line at libraries.ux@ttu.edu to let us know what you think about them!