UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS ARLINGTON

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IMPROVING PATRON DATA COLLECTION

PREPARED FOR UTA CENTRAL LIBRARY

PREPARED BY STUDENT GROUP FROM ENGL 3376 BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WRITING CLASS

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Executive Summary

Our mission is to connect people with the information that they need in a way that is easy to understand by creating new learning opportunities for others. We aim to provide the UTA library with an effective strategy to guide their employees in consistently using the SUMA program during their shifts. SUMA is an application that is used by library desk employees to record the questions they are asked by guests during their shift. We will conduct interviews with the supervisors, as well as the employees, asking questions ranging from how long they have been an employee for the UTA library to their experiences at the workplace. to gather information as to why library guest questions are not regularly being entered into the SUMA application by all employees on the desk. During these interviews, we aim to understand their thoughts and needs, as well as give them the opportunity to truly give us a look into their work experience. Throughout the time of conducting interviews, we will be sending out a survey to all UTA library employees in order to obtain more quantitative and specific data we will later use for our observations. In order to make the best decision for our client, we will also be conducting observations of employees at their workplace in order to visualize the usage or non-usage of SUMA on-sight and confirm the reliability of the data we collected during the interview and survey. We are going to provide multiple possible solutions to address their problems. It is a multifaceted issue that needs all parts to be addressed. We will provide a detailed blueprint that outlines issues we identified with our observations and potential solutions we brainstormed.

Current Situation

Our current situation is that while employees are aware about SUMA and the purpose of it, which is to track the amount and types of questions that employees have been asked during their shifts, a portion of employees are not doing so. This is a big concern for the UTA library since supervisors collect the data from SUMA and utilize it to plan scheduling and funding for employees. Below are the main factors that are contributing to the problem:

Lack of Training

We have realized that not all employees have gone through the same training nor have they been trained by the same supervisor. Due to the difference in training, most people forget this requirement or lack awareness of it. We also have been notified that there have been new hires for the supervisor position.

Poor Design of SUMA Software
Our client has requested a solution for the vague wording on the buttons in SUMA and negligence of the workers recording questions into the SUMA application. We are aware of SUMA and the layout of the website, and we can understand how it can be quite confusing for employees to fill out.

Specific Objectives

The number of questions recorded in SUMA needs to accurately reflect the library desk question traffic, and we will measure this with the after effects of our changes to the SUMA application. Our team will observe library staff for 30 minutes 12 times, making notes regarding the number of guest interactions and recording workplace patterns. To solve this problem, we will compare our physical observations of staff operations to the number of SUMA surveys entered that day. We will gather quantifiable data to guide our solution. Additionally, we will specifically conduct interviews with the library's supervisors and the staff who reviews SUMA data. To guarantee sufficient depth, our analysis will include a department-wide survey of at least 20 library assistants that are assigned to use SUMA in their everyday work. We will accumulate this data and use our findings to draw conclusions and establish the cause of the client's communication issues.

Deliverables Overview

Following the results of our studies and examinations, we will provide the library with a detailed plan to successfully make SUMA a tool that is used daily in the workplace. This will include documentation of workplace patterns and communication habits, graphs with numerical data and a presentation. To achieve this, we will arrange meetings, send emails, possibly work with the library's OIT department to make the website more user-friendly and require access to exclusive SUMA statistics regarding question traffic. This will result in more informed decisions and recommendations to solve their issue. Possible solutions may involve: retraining or replacing staff or a software redesign, implementing staff meetings, etc.

Personnel Qualifications

We are capable consultants due to our educational backgrounds and our work experiences. Two of us currently work for libraries in Arlington, one of which is the UTA Central Library. Personally knowing how a library system functions behind the scenes is beneficial to understanding how both the employees and the university are being affected. We are also consistently on campus and are easier to reach. Our dedication to finding the right solution for this is distinguishable among other potential consulting firms. Several team members have experience writing proposals and all members have taken technical communications classes. There is a mutual clear understanding of the product and how to personalize the user experience.

Conclusion

The overall goal of our proposal is to have every staff member be aware of the requirement to record questions during their shift and implement ways to make filling this requirement easier by bringing awareness to every staff member about tracking their guest interactions. As students, ourselves, of the University of Texas at Arlington, we like to see

organizations doing their best around campus. We value the library and all it has to offer. Working with this project site is worth our time because it improves the operations of the library and allows us to give back to something that serves us. We also value the library's guiding principles of caring, empowering, taking ownership, and being extraordinary.