User Groups and User Needs

DigitalPreservationCoalition

IIPC
netpreserve.org

Why is it Important to Understand Your Users?

Reasons for User Analysis

- Can help with:
  - Advocacy
  - Collecting Decisions
  - Identifying metadata requirements
  - Defining preservation needs
  - Adhering to standards
  - Designing user access services
- (End) users are a subset of your stakeholders
 - Must consider other stakeholders too

OAIS Designated Communities

- Knowing your 'Designated Community' (DC) is essential for OAIS compliance

- OAIS standard requires that:
  - The Designated Community (DC) is scoped
  - Preserved info is understandable by the DC
  - The information is available to the DC in an authentic form

- Makes user needs analysis essential and impacts on:
  - Preservation decisions
  - Metadata and Documentation
  - Access provision

PRODUCER — OAIS ARCHIVE — CONSUMER

MANAGEMENT

Digitalbevaring.dk
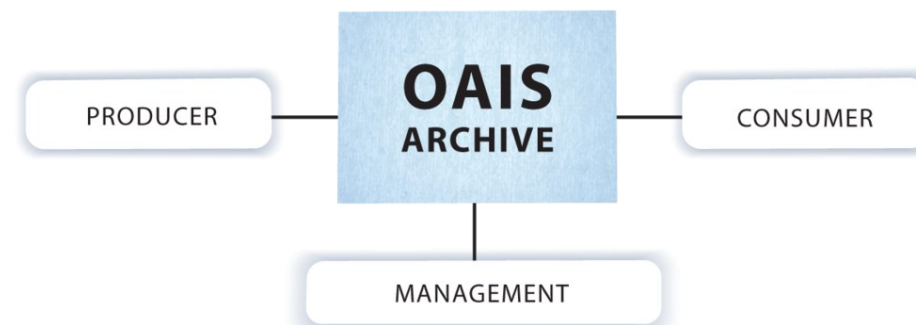
Types of User Groups

- How to define your user group(s)?

- One? Or more with different needs?

- You may consider defining your groups by:
  - Discipline
  - Sector
  - How the resources will be used
  - A particular age group
  - Location or language
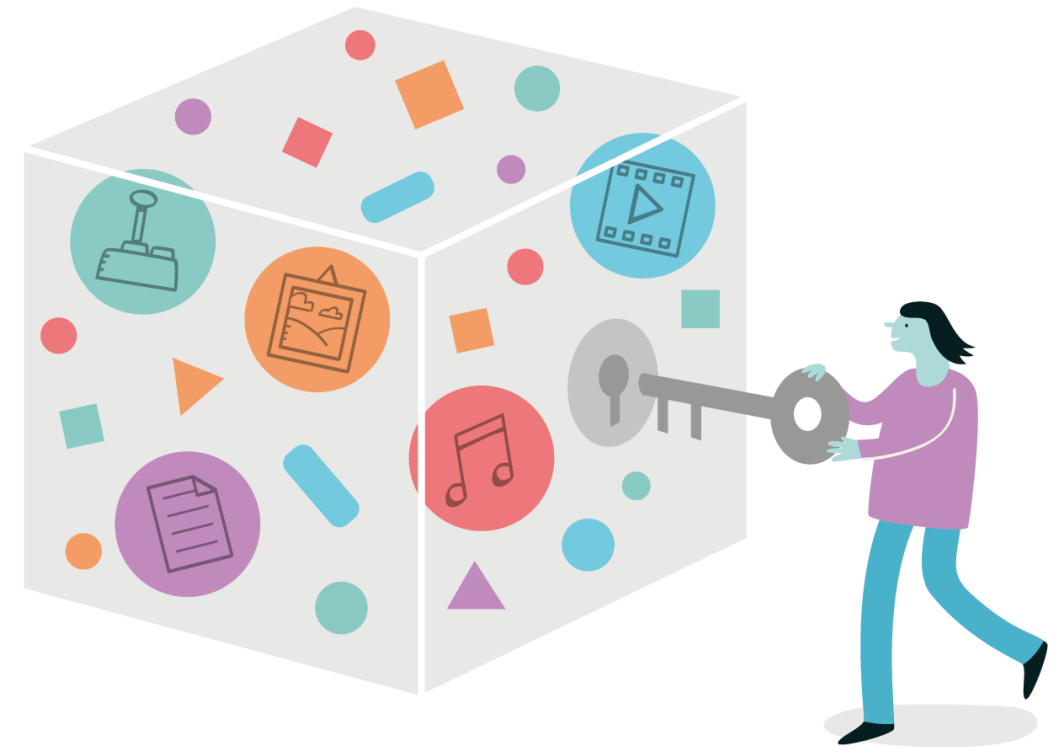 - Or as broad as the general public!

Understanding Their Needs

- Once user group(s) are defined, what do they need?
- Should consider issues such as:
  - Access
  - Reuse
  - Supporting documentation
  - Tools
- Then select methods for user analysis
  - What resources available?
  - What Qs you need answered?
  - What you users will respond to?
- This should be a regular process

Some Methods for
User Analysis

Surveys

- Collection and analysis of the opinions/attitudes of a group by asking them answer a series of questions
- Pros:
  - Can reach a lot of people
  - Can be posted online
  - Relatively cheap and easy to put together
  - Quantitative outputs that are easy to analyse
- Cons
  - Difficult to capture detailed info
  - Unlikely to be representative of the user experience
  - Reliant on those willing to spend time filling it in
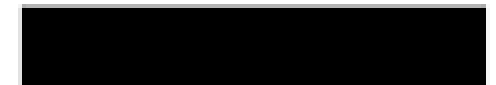
Analytics

"The measurement, collection, analysis and reporting of web data for purposes of understanding and optimizing web usage" (Wikipedia)

- Pros
  - Can be collected automatically
  - Captures high level usage information for most users
  - Shows patterns of usage
  - Produces info that is easy to analyse
- Cons
  - Lacks qualitative responses
  - Not representative of the user experience
  - May be blocked by advanced users

Focus Groups/Workshops

- Bringing together small groups of users to describe and discuss their experiences and needs
- Pros
  - Direct interaction with users
  - Dive deeply into important issues
  - Capture multiple perspectives
  - Follow interesting discussions
  - Test out/generate new ideas
- Cons
  - Difficult/expensive to organise
  - Only users willing/able to attend
  - Easy to get off track

Interviews

A structured/semi-structured Q&A session with a user(s)

- Pros
  - Direct interaction with users
  - Able to dive deeply into important issues
  - Can tailor the session to the user
  - Can follow interesting answer threads
- Cons
  - Reaches a limited number of users
  - Not representative
  - Difficult to organise/identify right users
  - Can be intimidating for participants
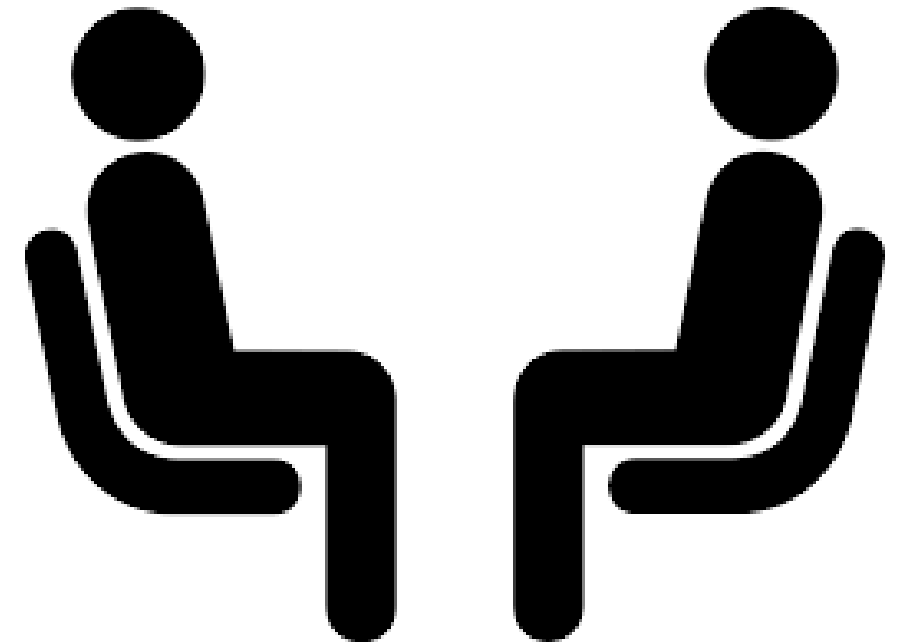
Usability Testing

A technique for testing a product with users. Often by asking them to perform set tasks before answering questions.

- Pros
  - Feedback on functionality
  - Can compare user experiences
  - Quantitative and qualitative data

- Cons
  - Difficult/expensive to organise
  - May be hard to define useful tasks
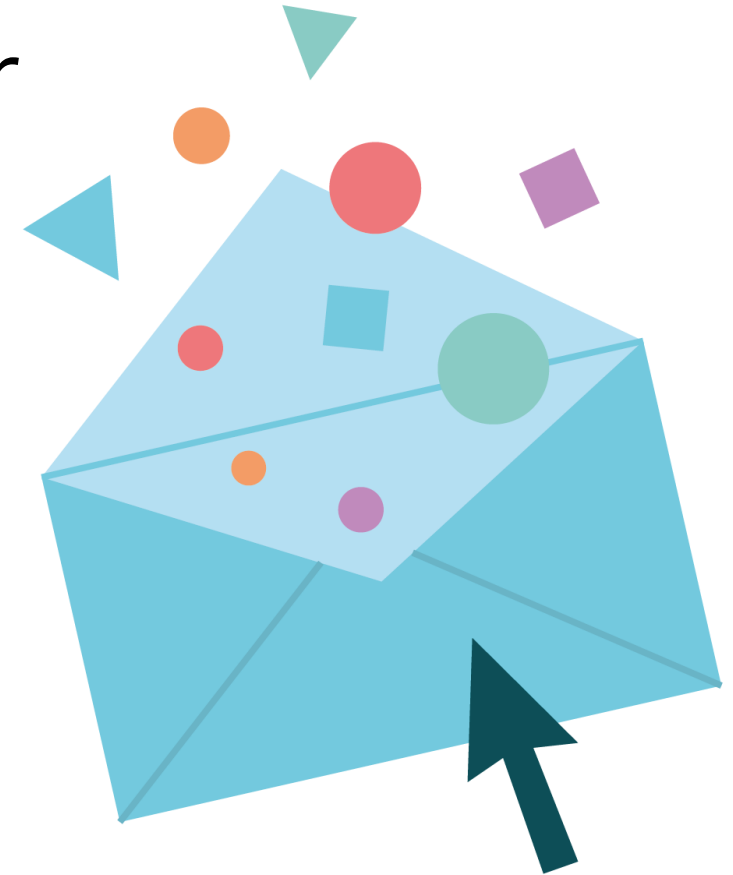 - Will reach a limited number of users

How User Analysis Can Be Utilized

Identifying Requirements

- Earlier the better!
- Help choosing a tool(s) for capture or curation e.g.
  - Capture Method
  - Quality Assurance
- Mode of access
  - Remote access through a browser
  - End user software for analysis
  - Access that includes built-in basic data analytics

Design and Functionality

- Earlier the better!
- Help choosing a tool(s) for capture or curation e.g.
  - Capture Method
  - Quality Assurance
- Mode of access
  - Remote access through a browser
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User Engagement

Provides a foundation for User Engagement activities. This can include:

- Measuring Current User Engagement
- Increase User Engagement
- Allow you to clearly state benefits of web archiving
- Increase awareness of web archiving