

# SHARING RESEARCH INSIGHTS ACROSS GSA

General Services Administration | Office of Customer Experience

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## Keywords:

interview study, user research, personas, qualitative research, insights libraries

## Summary:

Daniela led a discovery research project to improve the effectiveness of sharing research findings and actionable insights across the General Services Administration (GSA). By conducting a preliminary **literature review**, **competitive analysis**, and 27 one-hour semi-structured **interviews**, Daniela identified key user needs, the types of users who would benefit from sharing insights, and the preferences for how insights should be shared across the GSA. She developed **user personas** for the different user types, uncovered **five key themes** related to user needs and potential **design considerations** to address these needs, and outlined a plan for the next research phase. Her work will be used to inform the next round of research for a GSA insights library.

# SHARING RESEARCH INSIGHTS ACROSS GSA: UNDERSTANDING USER NEEDS AND PERSPECTIVES

Office of Customer Experience  
General Services Administration  
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coding it forward >



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# GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION

Liz Brodd

Kai Cobb

Camille  
Tucker

Alexander  
Lopez-Perez

Behati Hart

Tiffany  
Werkowitz

Ana Monroe  
Fitzner

Genevieve  
Christensen

Patricia  
Cheng

Amy Qiao

Stephen  
Brockelman

Peggy Chau

# GSA OVERVIEW

The **General Services Administration (GSA)** does the following:



Real Estate



Buy and Sell  
Goods



Implement  
Policy



Technology



Support  
Offices

# RESEARCH INSIGHTS AND LIBRARIES



**Research insights:** Meaningful research takeaways that are often the “so what?” part of a research project



**Insights libraries:** storing, managing, and sharing research insights

# PROJECT PURPOSE

There's **so much research** happening at the GSA so we want to:



Understand a way to **share research, findings, and actionable insights** more effectively across GSA



Articulate **user needs**, understand if there are users that would **benefit from sharing** insights, and how/if people want to share insights

# RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What **research insights libraries** already exist within other organizations or agencies, and what do they look like?
2. If we were to create a GSA insights library, who are the **potential users** and what are their needs?
3. What are **design considerations** that can address users' needs?
4. What are **recommendations** for the next round of research?

# COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

Comparing:

- Insights libraries used in other organizations
- Platforms used for insights libraries

Looking for:



Strengths



Weaknesses



Targeted users



# 27

Semi-structured, one-hour interviews

Five GSA offices, five agencies

# INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS



## **Users:**

Someone at GSA that may want access to existing data or research to support their work



## **Subject-matter experts (SME):**

Someone who conducts research and may have experience in setting up and/or using an insights library



## **Both:**

Someone who is a user and SME

# INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

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Affinity Diagramming



Creating Themes and Personas

# INSIGHTS

Personas, Themes, User Needs, and Design Considerations

# USER PERSONAS

## Researcher

**Goals:** Access to existing GSA research to see what's already been conducted; one central location for all research

**Pain points:** Lack of knowledge sharing and knowledge management

## Senior Executive

**Goals:** Learn what is driving GSA program outcomes; gain a holistic view of stakeholder satisfaction

**Pain points:** Lack of time to make data-driven decisions and recommendations

## Data Analyst

**Goals:** Understand what questions have already been asked in surveys and other quantitative data

**Pain points:** Spending too much time trying to find resources to inform their work

## Academic

**Goals:** Have an indexed, up-to-date library that is searchable and easy to understand the context of each of the research insights

**Pain points:** The insights within academic literature may be limited

# KEY THEMES

1

Findability

2

Relevancy

3

Trustworthiness

4

Communication and  
Culture

5

Time

# FINDABILITY

Theme 1 (If you are interested in the full slides with all the themes, their insights, and design considerations, please reach out!)

“I think the challenge is that you don't know what you don't know ...

**There is no catalog of previous research.”**

- Data Analyst



# FINDABILITY

**INSIGHT 1:** Identifying previous, relevant research is currently dependent on **word of mouth.**

**USER NEEDS:** Know what research already exists and where to find it

- Researcher/data analyst/academic: Build on past work
- Senior executive: Inform strategic decisions



“I'll just say I don't have all of this experience and knowledge [of this field] . . . There are lots of opportunities for us to **share intelligence** across GSA.”

- Researcher

# FINDABILITY

**INSIGHT 2:** Providing visibility and transparency of previous research can promote **knowledge sharing and learning across teams.**

**USER NEEDS:** A way to build up a knowledge base and share insights with others

- Researcher/data analyst/academic: Disseminate findings from others and foster collaborative learning across teams
- Senior executive: Inform new research projects



“So I've been wanting to **find one of those reports for months now,** and I have gone in there spelunking through the caves and ... I haven't found it and I need to go back.”

- Researcher

# FINDABILITY

**INSIGHT 3:** Having an easy way to access previous research can help lessen the reliance on informal, less reliable methods and save time.

**USER NEEDS:** A way to save time when looking at previously conducted research

- Researcher/data analyst/academic: Quickly find and review relevant research
- Senior executive: Quickly obtain relevant data for strategic decisions



# FINDABILITY: DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

**Single hub:** Central location where users can find research insights

**Accessible:** Inclusive, quick access

**Organized:** Filtering, searching, tagging, keywords

**Simple:** Option for summarized research data

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Is this something we should continue?

- Yes! But ...
- Users want an insights library, but they also have some concerns and tensions

Prototype:

- What does an insights library look like?
- Testing it with a variety of teams and users



# THANK YOU!

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