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## **Reimagining academic library user experience**

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2016

Dostupný z <http://www.nusl.cz/ntk/nusl-367297>

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Datum stažení: 19.04.2024

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# NTK

50°6'14.083"N, 14°23'26.365"E  
Národní technická knihovna  
National Library of Technology

## Reimagining academic library user experience:

## Using mystery shopping to inform service decisionmaking at the Czech National Library of Technology

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National Library of Technology

QQML 2016

# About NTK

NTK = “The library is a service”

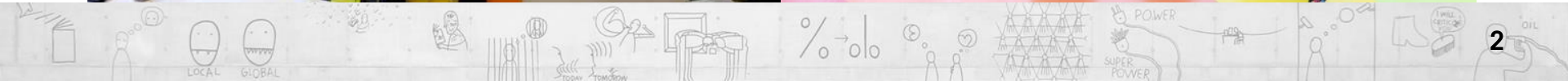
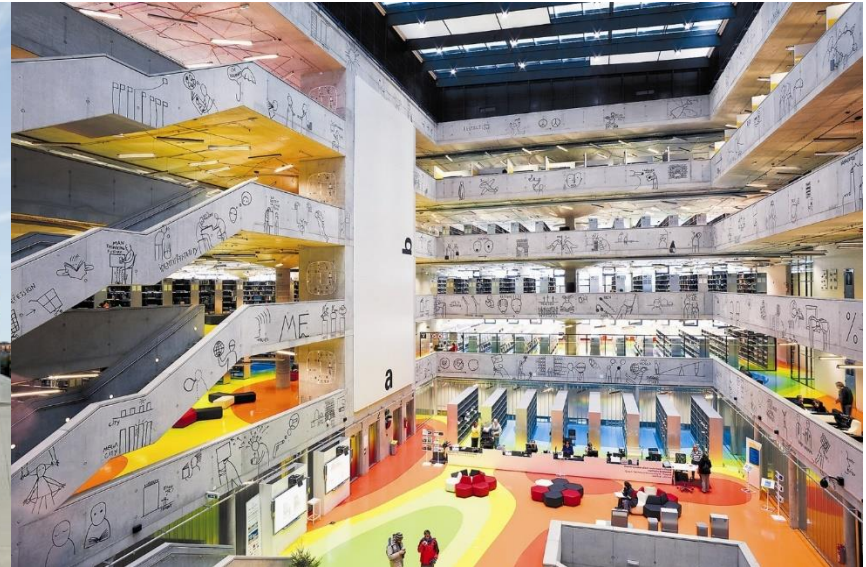
- **Academic:** Cooperation with Prague’s science and technology campus

“We want NTK to be the perfect academic library supporting a transfer of innovation into practice.”

- **Integrated:** NTK library = joint collection of NTK + University of Chemistry and Technology, Prague + Czech Academy of Science’s Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry
- **National:** Provides countrywide services (National Repository of Grey Literature, Czech ISSN National Center, Document Delivery Infrastructure [Virtual Polytechnic Library])
- **Social and cultural center:** Frequent lectures, educational tours, cinema, events and exhibitions

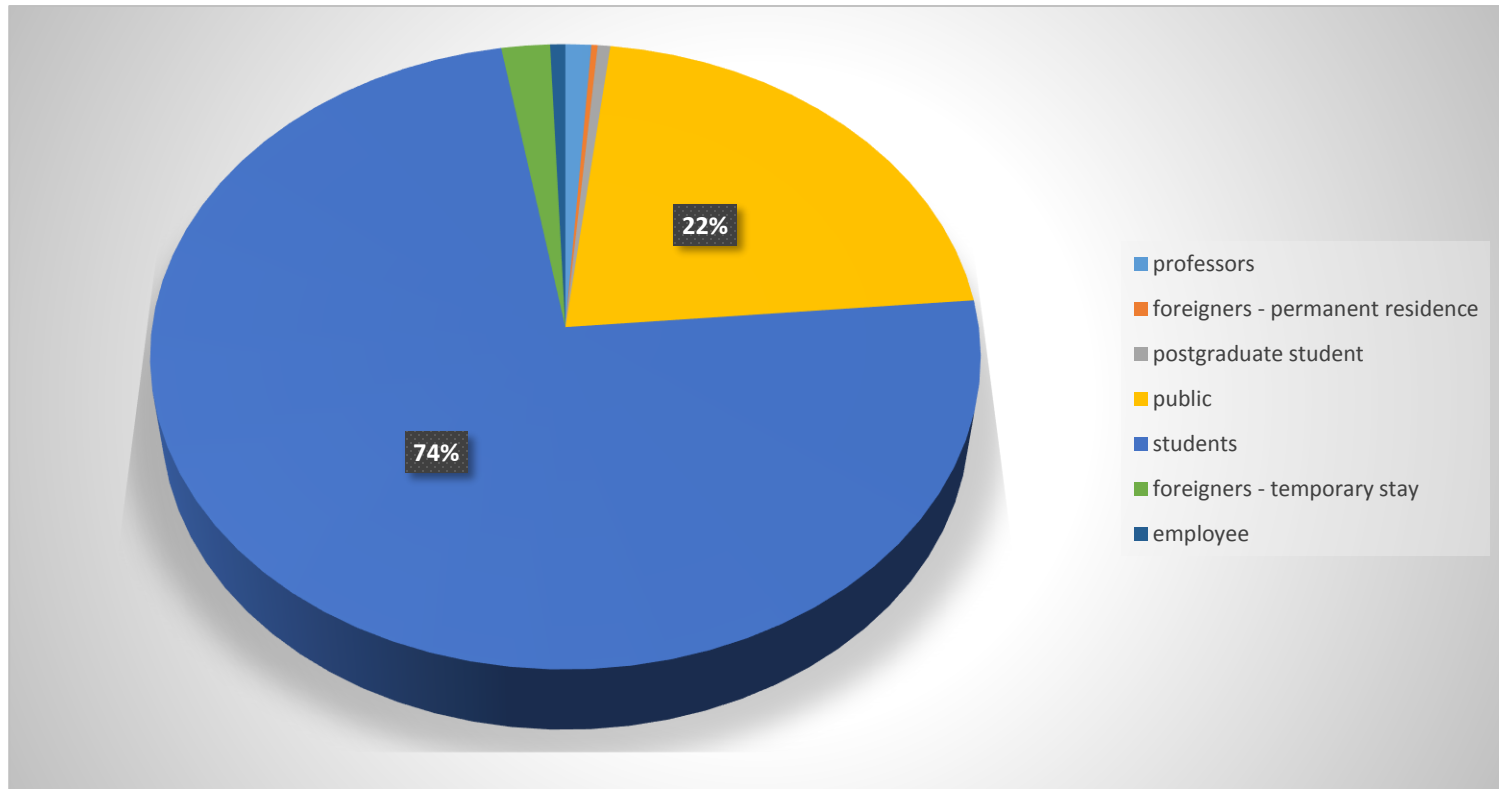


# NTK in pictures



# About NTK

- **Approximately 27,000 patrons:** 74% students, 22% general public, 1% professors, 1% postgraduate students



# Mystery shopping (MS) 2014

- **Beginning:** MS 2014 started as a **part of diploma thesis** focused on evaluation of library services
- **Why this method:** MS in general is considered to be an effective and cheap decisionmaking tool targeted at the **improvement of services**
- **Preparation:** Only one person was in charge of preparations supported by the library's administration
- **Methodology:**
  - Used prior MS experiences from other non-profit organizations in the CR
  - Used library standards (IFLA Public Library Service Guidelines + RUSA Guidelines for Behavioral Performance of Reference and Information Service Providers) and The Code of Ethics of Czech Librarians
    - Creation of The Professional Behavioral Code for Service Personnel
  - Creation of **Instructions** (tasks in person + by telephone + by email) and **MS form** (10 areas of activity, 38 specific questions)
  - Using **Map of contact points** + **"The path of service"**
    - Creation of a **Mind Map**



# Mystery shopping 2014

- **4 tested areas:**
  - Service personnel at staffed desks
  - Library building
  - Services provided
  - Library IT infrastructure
- **MS 2014 focused primarily on the environment of the library**
  
- **Shoppers:**
  - 10 volunteers recruited
  - Students, employees, senior citizens
  - Stratification of shoppers **did not match** the structure of the library's patron base
  
- **Timeframe: November 3-23, 2014**



# Suggestions for service improvement in 2014

- **Implementation of the following suggestions (rather slight changes):**
  - ✓ **Service staff training** (in expertise and social skills)
    - Training courses for all service personnel
  - ✓ **Signage** in the library space
    - Distributed a guide to the library, “**Getting Started at NTK**”
  - ✓ Unreliable **Wi-Fi connections** and computers in public spaces
    - Made Ethernet cables available as alternative
    - Upgraded public computing equipment





# Mystery shopping 2015

- **Why again?:**
- MS 2014 proved to be an effective and cheap tool for evaluating **“how to change and improve services”**
- To compare with the 2014 study’s results and findings
- To gather additional information about library services and new feedback regarding potential areas for improvement



# Mystery shopping 2015

- **Methodology:**
- Larger scale testing - **six member team**
- Use of **Professional Behavioral Code** designed in 2014
- Use of so-called "**personas**" and "**customer journey mapping**"
  
- Modified and updated **Form and Instructions**
- **4 tested areas** – in-person visit, website, phone services, email services
- **122 specific questions** selected in key testing areas
- Shoppers rated services with a grade and discussed in an in-person follow-up interview
  
- MS 2015 **focused on the user-friendliness** of systems and desk services



# Mystery shopping 2015

- **Implementation:**
- Cooperation and co-creation of evaluated themes across library departments
- All employees informed about the process and terms of MS
- **Recruitment:**
- Recruitment of candidates through our website (Jobs & Internships section) and Facebook page
- 2014 volunteers vs. 2015 modest financial reward for shoppers
  
- **Timeframe: November 30-December 11, 2015**





# SWOT analysis comparison

## ▪ STRENGTHS 2014:

- Study and relaxation areas
- Library environment
- Self-service borrowing/returning machines
- Helpful staff

+ Clarity of space

## ▪ STRENGTHS 2015:

- Study and relaxation areas
- Library environment
- Self-service borrowing/returning machines
- Helpful staff

+ The main webpage and “My Account” (patron account)

+ Speed and factual accuracy of email communication

+ Online credit card payment

+ Information and consultation services





▪ **OPPORTUNITIES 2014:**

- + Staff training (social competence and expertise)
- + Improvement of signage throughout the building
- + Removal and performance improvements for kiosks, with instructions for use
- + Better signage to guide patrons to books on shelves  
(e.g. tabs for separating various subject categories)
- + Better promotion of services

▪ **OPPORTUNITIES 2015:**

- + Circulation staff: more training
- + Lack of study places on campus
- + First contact and expectations during registration
- + Escape from procrastination
- + Open on weekends





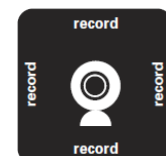






# Suggestion for service improvement 2015

- ✓ Redesign of study room reservation software
  - 2017/2018: new system
- ✓ Redesign of **online catalog**
  - Beta version of updated catalog interface (personalized VuFind)
  - User testing and questionnaire
- ✓ Video tutorials
  - Made with interns



# What next?

- MS identified main problem areas of user experience and brought surprising recommendations, encouraging us to make changes differently and more boldly
- In 2017, plan to conduct **another round of MS** to examine whether or not issues and solutions identified in the previous rounds have been resolved
- MS approved as a useful tool for informed decisionmaking; will be supplemented in the future with focus groups and consultative student committee



# Thank you and contact information

- **NTK's web side:**
  - <https://www.techlib.cz/en/>
- **MS form and Instructions:** <http://repozitar.techlib.cz/record/1003/?ln=en>
- **Contacts:**

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